DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 220 774 CG 016 181

AUTHOR Hunt, Margaret; Munro, Constance
TITLE Life Skills for Women in Transition.
INSTITUTION Alaska Univ., Juneau. Southeastern Region.
SPONS AGENCY Women's Educational Equity Act Program (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 190p.; For related document, see CG 016 180.
AVAILABLE FROM Education Development Center, 55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02160.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Assertiveness; Career Exploration; Coping; *Displaced Homemakers; Educational Opportunities; *Interpersonal Relationship; Job Search Methods; *Midlife Transitions; Program Descriptions; Reentry Workers; *Self Actualization; *Stress Variables; Workshops

ABSTRACT

This reference book is designed for participants in a workshop or course series for women who are newly independent or involved in other life transitions. The contents of each topic are presented through narratives, group exercises, individual tasks, discussions, and use of specific resources. The first unit covers the concerns faced by a woman on her own, e.g., assertiveness, conflict, stress, coping, and money. Other topics include education, career exploration, job seeking, and family communication, with a special emphasis on the value of peer counseling. The guide provides basic information about important topics in women's lives and suggests strategies for coping with problems and changes as well as giving women the confidence to initiate changes in lifestyle and relationships. (JAC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED220774

HARD COPY NOT AVAILABLE

LIFE SKILLS FOR WOMEN IN TRANSITION

Margaret Hunt
Constance Munro

Women in Transition Program
University of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

T. H. Bell, Secretary

CG 016181

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

T. B. Sidberry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Discrimination Prohibited: No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, or be so treated on the basis of sex under most education programs or activities receiving Federal assistance.

The activity which is the subject of this report was produced under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, under the auspices of the Women's Educational Equity Act. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Printed and distributed by the WEEA Publishing Center, 1982,
at Education Development Center, 55 Chapel Street,
Newton, Massachusetts 02160

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

INTRODUCTION 1

UNIT I - STARTING OUT 3

Chapter 1 - The Woman on Her Own 5
Chapter 2 - Assertiveness Training 11
Chapter 3 - Dealing with Stress/Time Management/Decision Making 21
Chapter 4 - Money 29

UNIT II - EDUCATION 45

Chapter 1 - High School Equivalency 47
Chapter 2 - Colleges and Universities 53
Chapter 3 - Job Training 65
Chapter 4 - Community Resources 77

UNIT III - CAREER EXPLORATION 87

Chapter 1 - Exploring Work Values 89
Chapter 2 - Knowing Your Skills 95
Chapter 3 - Career Assessment Tests 97
Chapter 4 - Nontraditional Jobs for Women 99
Chapter 5 - Finding Information on Careers 109
Chapter 6 - Setting Goals for Your Career 113

UNIT IV - JOB SEEKING 119

Chapter 1 - Uncovering Job Openings and Reading Job Notices 121
Chapter 2 - The Whole Person Resume/Job Applications 127
Chapter 3 - How to Write a Cover Letter 143
Chapter 4 - The Interview 149

UNIT V - ON THE JOB 157

Chapter 1 - Making a Good Impression and Having It Last . . 159
Chapter 2 - Being Assertive on the Job 163
Chapter 3 - Developing a Support Network 169

UNIT VI - FAMILY COMMUNICATION 173

Chapter 1 - Communicating with Small Children 175
Chapter 2 - Communicating with Teenagers 179
Chapter 3 - Communicating with a Partner 183

INDEX 189

Acknowledgments

We wish to express our appreciation to Vicki Becker, Pat Antioquia, Roxanne Pierce, Helen Baxter, Ann Burkhardt, Jackleen Allen, Cathy Moore, Mary Millar and Beverly Andison for typing various stages of the manuscript and giving us encouragement and sound editorial advice along the way. Special thanks to the Advisory Board for the Women in Transition Project: Barbara Bondi, Wilma Harris, Karen Cory, Arlene Dilts, Dixie Hood, Viola Burgess, Kathleen Isturis, Linda Dalton, Sue Koester, Emily Williams, Katherine Amundson, Margaret Gross, and most especially, Beatrice Brown.

The following people and organizations offered help, encouragement and diversion at different stages of the planning and writing of this book: Johanna Hotch and the Alaska Native Sisterhood, Charlotte Siverly, Alfred Widmark, Cy Peck, Jr., Dianne McComas, Jan Crichton, Vicki Johnson, Bill Marchese, David Alexander, Evelyn Corpuz, Deborah Patrick, Carol Anderson, Nita Coronell, Patricia Van Kirk and KTOO Radio and Television of Juneau, Stephanie Scowcroft, Janet Bradley and the Alaska Human Rights Commission, Bella Hammond and the staff of the Governor's Mansion, Michael Metty, Robbie Stell, Marie Lium, Myrna Sharclane, Laura Johnson, Vicky Bodine, Sandra Harbanuk, Corinne Garza, Janice Irvine, Liz Dodd, Lee Stoops, Vivian Guilfoy, Phillip Hocker, Harry Keim and the staff of the University of Alaska, Juneau Business Office, Lisa Leghorn and the women of Transition House, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Artemis March, Lisa Hunter, Janet Stone, Alan Munro, Maig Kennedy, the Tlingit-Haida Central Council, Lynne Woods and the Alaska Commission on the Status of Women, Sharman Haley, Betty Long, Constance Simpson, Mildred Sparks, Remonda Shoemaker, Anne Moore, Dorothy Wallace, Margo Melnicove and Amy Kyle.

Barbara Norris and Margaret Jacob helped with the final preparation of the book and made other contributions all along the way that are too numerous to name. Emma Widmark was our immensely helpful Project Evaluator, and Steven Brown, our patient and very encouraging Project Administrator and good friend. Doris Shakin was our Project Officer on the Women's Educational Equity Act Program staff, and we are most grateful to her and to the rest of the WEEA staff. Last, we would like to express our gratitude to the participants in the "Living: A Learning Process" workshops, held in Juneau, Alaska, in April 1979. They included Alaskan women from the towns of Hoonah, Klukwan, Haines, Skagway, Craig, Angoon, Metlakatla, Klawock, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell and Juneau. Without their help, this book would never have become a reality.

None of the persons mentioned here bear any responsibility for the views presented in this book.

Introduction

We are all women in transition. Our particular transition may involve becoming divorced, separated, or widowed; growing older; going back to school or out to a paid job; seeing our children grow up; coping with ill health or financial problems; uprooting ourselves from places and people who have grown familiar; or a host of other things. In this book, which is especially written for women in transition, we have tried to do three things:

1. Encourage women to take control of their own lives and become stronger and more self-confident human beings, even in the midst of difficult life transitions.

2. Get people to work together to solve problems, whether they are the problems of an individual, a family, a community, or society.

3. Provide basic information about matters that are of great importance in our lives, things like money, being alone, career exploration and job seeking, obtaining an education, and communicating with family members.

This sourcebook is designed mainly for classroom use, but individuals will also find it useful as a general resource book. The contents are presented in several ways:

1. Narratives, which provide basic information about particular subjects, focus on those areas that are of greatest concern to women. In a classroom setting this information can form the basis for a lecture by a workshop leader, or it can supplement other material that the leader, students, or a guest speaker may be presenting.

2. Exercises, conducted either in small groups or as whole class activities, in which students role play different situations, collectively develop solutions to problems, and collect information of general interest. Exercises are done as a group.

3. Tasks, in which class members individually fill out inventories or perform other activities which contribute to greater self-knowledge or the solution to some problem.

4. Discussions, in which we suggest questions on topics that need additional coverage, or in areas about which there may be differences of opinion. There are seldom any single "correct" answers to these questions, but they are useful for encouraging group participation in the learning process and for presenting differing points of view. They also offer an opportunity for exchange of useful information.

5. Resources, in which we give suggestions for where to find further information. We have tried to concentrate on materials that may be easily found in libraries or written away for, or that may be purchased inexpensively.

In addition, we have included an index at the end to make the book useful for general reference.

In reading this book, you will find that the feelings you are having and the experiences you are going through are not unique, though they may be difficult or frightening. It is our hope, as women in transition, that if we work together on the problems which are so much a part of our lives, we will begin to arrive at solutions.

UNIT I-Starting Out

Chapter 1 - The Woman On Her Own

OBJECTIVE: To explore feelings that women often have who are on their own for the first time. To learn about peer counseling and self-help.

Separation, Divorce, Widowhood, Family Violence

These crises can have a serious impact on a woman's life. All of them either force us to be on our own or threaten us with the possibility of being on our own.

Most women are not taught to be on their own. We grow up believing that we will get married early and be totally or partially supported by a man. Whether or not this really happens (and often it doesn't), we don't prepare ourselves to be self-sufficient, self-supporting human beings. As teenagers, young women aren't strongly encouraged to take job training. What training they do take leads to low-paying jobs. Women don't get trained for more challenging jobs because everyone assumes they will get married, and that once they do, they will not work outside the home except to supplement the family income. Parents assume this, teachers assume it, guidance and vocational counselors assume it, and young women themselves assume it.

The real truth is that five, ten, or twenty years down the road many of these women will suddenly be on their own because of divorce, separation, or the death of their husbands. Often they will have a hard time finding jobs because they have little or no paid job experience, and they may suffer severe financial hardship. Other women may find themselves trapped in unhappy, even dangerous, marriages, unable to leave because they have no way to support themselves and their children. After half a lifetime of being dependent, many women find it very hard to make the financial and emotional transition to being on their own.

This is one side of the coin. The other side is that being on one's own, despite the hardships, can be a marvelous experience. In taking control of our own lives for the first time, we can become stronger, happier people. We don't forget the fear, pain or sorrow, but we can come out at the other end more self-confident and more ready to live the rest of our lives.

Read the following statements. Do they seem familiar to you? Have you or someone you know had similar feelings or experiences?

SEPARATED - *Feelings of helplessness*
Never been on her own before

> "I'm afraid I won't be able to make it on my own. I've always had men around, first my father, then my husband. I've never taken care of my own money before, and I don't make much as a sales checker. I can't even fix the toilet when it gets plugged. I get to feeling more and more helpless."
>
> -Myrna

DIVORCED - *Feelings of guilt*
A sense of new freedom

"I feel embarrassed and, well, guilty that our marriage didn't work out. Maybe I didn't work hard enough at it. That's what I think some days. Other days I think, 'Wow! It's so great to be on my own, making my own decisions, running my own life....' It's like an adventure. I was so nervous and depressed all the time before...I just hated myself. I guess my self-esteem is still kind of low, but it's getting better."

-Juanita

FORMER BATTERED WOMAN - *Learning new things*
Kids are happier
Family has met a big challenge together and overcome it

"I'm turning into a different person now; it's like being reborn. I'm learning to do new things that I never thought I'd ever do. I make some mistakes, sure, but that's natural when you're starting out new. My kids seem a lot happier now, too. We're close because it's like we went through the wars together. One good thing about all this is that I've realized how important my friends are in my life."

-Elizabeth

BATTERED WIFE - *Husband isn't always violent and kids love him*
Confusion: can a violent husband be a good father?
Worried about supporting herself and her children

"The trouble is that my husband is sometimes great and when he is, I almost forgive him for the other stuff. My kids really love him, and they'd hate to leave. I know the violence is starting to affect them, though; my little Tommy is already copying his dad. I don't know what to do. There's no way I could make as much money as my husband does."

-Sarah

WIDOW - *Helplessness*
Resentment at how hard it is to live

"When my husband died, I felt like I died, too. I was just paralyzed. I couldn't figure out what to do. Everything overwhelmed me, and there were such awful money problems. Sometimes I just hated him for doing this to me. I'm only now getting back on my feet."

-Martina

Discussion (divide into small groups of five to seven people each):

1. Discuss how important the following abilities are for women on their own. Do you feel confident in these areas?

   a. Managing money (checkbooks, insurance, establishing credit, etc.)

   b. Fixing small things that go wrong around the house (plumbing, etc.)/knowledge of tools

   c. Fixing things that go wrong with cars/dealing with auto mechanics

   d. Dealing with landlords or realtors/dealing with legal matters

   e. Being able to defend yourself or act quickly if attacked or faced with an emergency

   f. Finding and holding down a paying job

   g. Driving or getting around with public transportation

2. In what area have you had (or do you think you might have) the most trouble? What might you do to gain more confidence in this area?

PEER COUNSELING: HELPING EACH OTHER AND HELPING OURSELVES

Peer counseling is counseling from regular people like ourselves. It is not done by psychiatrists, social workers, ministers or doctors, but by friends, relatives, or interested lay people. Most likely you have done peer counseling at one time or another without knowing what it was called. One of the best kinds of peer counseling is mutual help, situations in which people who have gone through a crisis help other people going through the same thing. A good example of this is Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, in which recovering alcoholics give support and encouragement to other recovering alcoholics. Sometimes this kind of counseling works better than counseling by a professional.

Today, peer counseling is beginning to get more and more recognition. Everywhere small groups are starting up to offer support through peer counseling to people going through life crises. There are widows' groups, groups for parents without partners, groups which give counseling and reassurance to women who have been raped, and groups started to help people get jobs. Sometimes peer counseling turns into something more. About ten years ago, support groups for battered women started up. Now there is a nationwide network of more than 150 secret shelters, safe homes, and legal aid groups. These help women who are living in or trying to escape violent homes. They were almost all started by women who had lived with violence themselves and who wanted to help other women.

Often when we've gone through a difficult period of our lives, we start thinking we're unique or alone. We begin to distrust our feelings, or think we're sick or bad to feel the way we do. When we talk with other persons who have gone through similar experiences, we find out that our

feelings are normal. Most people going through that situation feel the same way we do. We start to trust ourselves again, and soon we begin to feel stronger and happier. Before we know it, we're helping other people.

Often in a peer counseling situation we discover pitfalls to avoid. Suppose a woman needs a lawyer. The peer counselor may know which lawyers in the area are good and which are bad. She may have the names of useful agencies to go to for further help or for financial assistance, and she may have advice (based on her own experience and the experience of other women she knows) on the best way to get what is needed through a particular agency.

Peer counseling is based on the philosophy of self-help. In a peer counseling situation, a woman makes her own decisions. Peer counselors might point out possible choices or tell about their own experiences, but they avoid making anyone else's decisions for her. Also, they try not to judge other women's actions. Making our own decisions makes us feel strong and capable. It increases our self-esteem. In peer counseling, the goal is for everyone to be equal. Of course, there are situations in which people may need professional help instead of, or in addition to, peer counseling. People who are deeply depressed may need more individual attention than a support group can give.

Mutual-help organizations exist for all kinds of people, including divorced women, widows, and single parents. New ones are starting all the time. If you can't find the sort of group you want in your area, maybe you could start one yourself through a YWCA or YWHA, a church, synagogue, or community center, or a women's center. Most support groups insist that everything said within the group remain confidential.

Here is a scene from a support group for battered women. Notice how people begin to discover their common experiences. Later on, the discussion may move to the types of legal help that are available, where to go for shelter, or how to help one's children understand what is going on.

Support Group for Battered Women

Mabel - Helped start the support group, which meets in the basement of her church every week. She is 35 years old.

Bunny - Has been going to the support group for about two months. She is 26.

Harriet - Is here for the first time. She is quite shy and wonders if it has been a mistake to come. She is 41.

Mabel: Welcome. We always start off these meetings with a short explanation of why we're here. I'm Mabel, and I was one of the people who started this group. At the time it started over a year ago, I was living with my husband, who beat me. I was really confused and afraid. When I heard some people talk about starting this group, I knew it was what I needed. At that time, I was feeling

real isolated with no one to talk to. See, my husband didn't like me to have outside friends. I knew I needed to find some people who understood what I was going through, because the counselors I went to, half of them told me I had to stay with him to keep the family together, and the other half said I must like getting hit because I hadn't left! I couldn't figure out what to do. This group helped me get in touch with what I really wanted.

Bunny: I'm Bunny. That's interesting about your husband not letting you have friends. The guy I live with is just insanely jealous. I can't go anywhere without letting him know first. I'm supposed to be at the laundromat right now. And he won't even let me have women friends. It's crazy. Gradually, everyone I know has sort of dropped out of my life.

Mabel: Yeah, that's real common with women who come here. And who are you (looking at Harriet)?

Harriet: (With embarrassment) I...I'm Harriet. I just wanted to see what goes on here and...and...well, I told my husband I was going over to my brother's house. He's the only person I'm allowed to see. He's nice, my brother, but I'd just die if he found out what was going on with my husband and me.

Bunny: Have you told anyone else?

Harriet: Well, the doctor at the clinic knows. I mean, he's patched me up enough times. But it was just like you said. The doctor acts as if I like it because I haven't left my husband. I don't like it. I hate it, and I'm scared to death, but I don't have anywhere else to go, and I couldn't leave my children behind.

Mabel: That's an old myth, that women who stay with violent husbands are sick, or that they like it. But it is amazing how many people, even people with hotshot degrees, still believe it. Anyone with any sense could figure out the reasons why a person would find it hard to leave her husband. I mean, there's the money thing--you probably don't have any money of your own, do you?

Harriet: Well, 25 cents for bus fare, that's it.

Mabel: (Continuing) Then there's worrying about how your children would handle it if you kicked him out, and worrying whether he wouldn't just break in again and really bust you up, and worrying about what your mother would think, and worrying about whether if you worked a little harder at your marriage, this wouldn't happen... and a bunch of other things. And then people just decide you must like being beaten because you stay--I mean, that's just ridiculous!

Harriet: Hey, that's really true, all those things you said. I mean, I never realized other women worried about those same things.... You know, I've felt like I was crazy a lot of times worrying about

that stuff, but I guess it's just normal. Plus with my husband, he's an animal one day and the next day he's all sweet and telling me he'll never do it again. I guess I keep fooling myself....

Bunny: Yeah, my boyfriend does that, too. I believed him for a while....

Mabel: Harriet, it's really exciting to see a new face here. Why don't you tell us some more about yourself?

(The three women continue to talk about their experiences and trade useful advice.)

Discussion (divide into small groups of five to seven people each):

What kinds of support groups exist in your community? Do you think more are needed? Do you know anyone who has been helped by going to a support group? Have you ever been a "peer counselor" to anyone, maybe without even knowing it?

Chapter 2- Assertiveness Training

by Sue Koester and Margaret Hunt

OBJECTIVE: To discover what assertiveness is and to learn some techniques for being more assertive.

There are many different ways to behave when faced with conflicts or unpleasant situations, but for the purposes of learning assertiveness, we are going to divide them into four types, which we will call Passive, Aggressive, Indirect-Aggressive, and Assertive. Make columns on the board or on a piece of paper for each of these types of behavior. Next, read the examples and follow the directions that come after them.

PASSIVE: Joan is widowed and lives with her son and daughter-in-law. Every month she signs over her Social Security check to them as rent. They expect her to do a great deal of work around the house and also to babysit anytime they want to go out. Joan wishes she had some time to herself and she feels she's being taken advantage of, but she never objects. She always just does what she's told.

Exercise:

Under the column marked "Passive," write all the words the class can think of to describe a person who is acting passively.

AGGRESSIVE: When a minor part broke on James's truck, he flew into a rage and stormed over to the salesperson who had sold him the truck. He loudly demanded that the part be replaced free of charge, and he peppered his speech with obscenities and attacks on the salesperson's honesty.

Exercise:

Under the column marked "Aggressive," write all the words the class can think of to describe a person who is acting in an aggressive manner.

INDIRECT-AGGRESSIVE: Sally Ann is angry because her roommate is not doing his half of the housework. But instead of confronting him about it, she just acts cold and distant and stops giving him his phone messages.

Exercise:

Under the column marked "Indirect-Aggressive," write all the words the class can think of to describe a person who is acting in an indirectly passive manner.

ASSERTIVE: Renie finds that the books at her children's day-care center portray only whites and not any other ethnic group. She sets up an appointment with the director of the center. At that meeting, she describes the situation, expresses her concern that the children are being exposed to biased materials, and asks that better books be obtained immediately. She speaks persuasively and reasonably. She does not let herself get pressured into doing the work of compiling the list of books (that is the director's job), but she does agree to look briefly over the list once it is finished.

Exercise:

Under the column marked "Assertive," write all the words that the class can think of to describe a person who is being assertive.

Our goal is to become assertive. In this society, women are often taught to be passive or indirectly aggressive in their relationships with other people. Men, on the other hand, are often brought up to be more aggressive. Both women and men need to learn to be assertive. Nobody really likes to knuckle under all the time (be passive) or to fight, manipulate, or walk all over other people (be aggressive or indirectly aggressive). We, and the people around us, are happiest when we can arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution to conflicts or disagreements. That means being assertive.

IMPROVING YOUR SELF-CONCEPT

It's hard to be assertive when you're spending most of your time thinking negative or self-defeating thoughts. Most of us are far more in touch with our bad points than our good points. One of the things you have to do to be assertive is to start thinking of yourself as assertive, and as deserving, capable, and decent as well.

Exercise:

1. Garbage In/Garbage Out

   Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. On one side of the line write all your good points (things you like about yourself) and on the other, all your bad points (things you don't like about yourself). Don't let yourself get away with writing only a few good things and a long list of bad things. Be fair to yourself. When you're finished, carefully cut or tear the piece of paper along the line. Tear your bad points into small pieces and throw them in the garbage. Present your good points to the other people in the class.

2. Punishing Self-Defeating Thoughts/Rewarding Positive Ones*

What are self-defeating thoughts? Here is a list of some common ones:

"I'm too dumb to do anything like that."
"Nobody would want to spend time with me, anyway."
"I'm ugly and fat."
"Nobody likes me."
"I'm a rotten parent."
"Everything I try fails."
"I'm too old to start anything new."
"I couldn't do that by myself."
"I'm hopeless with money."

Self-defeating thoughts are just that. They defeat you, and keep you from living up to your potential. What are some of your self-defeating thoughts? Take a minute to write some down here, then present them to the class.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

One way to begin ridding yourself of negative, self-defeating thoughts is to punish yourself every time you catch yourself thinking one. Find some tasks you really hate doing, for example, cleaning out garbage cans or washing the bathroom. Whenever you find yourself thinking or saying something self-defeating, you have to do one of these tasks. As you do the task, try to think positive thoughts: "I am capable," "I have a nice personality," whatever the positive statement is that corresponds to the negative thought that got you stuck with that hateful task in the first place.

Of course, if you find yourself thinking positive thoughts, give yourself a reward. Examples of positive thoughts:

"I did a really good job on that project."
"I can put Susan into a better mood if I try."
"That's an area I'd do well in."

---

*This exercise is adapted from Asserting Yourself: A Practical Guide for Positive Change, by Sharon Anthony Bower and Gordon H. Bower. Copyright © 1976, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, Mass., pp. 38-40. Used by permission of the authors and publisher.

"I'm good to my friends."
"That was a pretty smart thing I just said."

Write down a positive thought that you're going to start saying to yourself and show it to the rest of the class.

_____

_____

TECHNIQUES FOR COMMUNICATING ASSERTIVELY

1. "One Issue at a Time" Rule

To be effective and find a solution that satisfies you, you must learn to deal with only one issue at a time. Often, when you're in a conflict situation, there are a number of things that are bothering you. Don't go on to a second or third or fourth problem until you have arrived at a satisfactory solution to the first problem. Otherwise, you will overwhelm and confuse the person you are talking to, and be less likely to get what you want.

2. "Broken Record" Technique

This is related to the one-issue-at-a-time rule. Often, the person you are talking to will try to bring up other problems or change the subject. This way, he or she can avoid dealing with your issue.* This can make you defensive, as well as confused. What you do is keep going back to your issue, just as if you were a broken record.

Example:

Lisa: I need to get some emergency funds right now so I can get my children away from my husband. It's not safe for any of us to be with him.

Welfare Worker: Why have you stayed married to him for so long if it's not safe?

Lisa: That's very complicated, but the main thing now is that my children and I are afraid for our lives, and we need to get out right away. That's why I need your help.

---

*For an excellent discussion of ways people use to get you off the track, see Chapter 10, "Downer Detours," in Bower and Bower, Asserting Yourself.

Welfare
Worker: Well, I mean, what did you do to him to make him act like that?

Lisa: My husband has a serious problem, but my main concern right now is to get us to a place of safety. I'd appreciate your help in getting us the funds we need to do this. Could you tell me exactly how much I'm entitled to if I have three dependent children and no other income?

Don't overuse the broken record technique. It should only be used within a specific discussion when the other person seems to be trying to get you off the track. It's not an excuse to nag or make bitter statements over and over again throughout the day. This is not only annoying, but it doesn't get you what you want. The broken record technique is most useful with people like welfare case workers, lawyers, or other authorities to whom you're looking for some specific kind of help. It's very important that you be sure of what you need so you can get your problem solved in a satisfactory way.

3. The "DESC" Technique

This is a technique developed by Sharon Anthony Bower and Gordon H. Bower and explained in their book Asserting Yourself: A Practical Guide for Positive Change. We give only a brief introduction to this technique here.

The basic idea behind the DESC technique (also called DESC script writing) is that you prepare beforehand for situations in which assertiveness is needed. DESC stands for Describe, Express, Specify, and Consequences. This technique is especially good for those scenes that happen over and over again, in which you never feel very good. After using DESC deliberately in several situations, you can begin to be more assertive in on-the-spot confrontations.

Here are the four steps of the DESC method:

a. Describe - Describe the behavior or situation that is bothering you. Be as specific, as truthful, and as objective as possible, but also be brief. Don't generalize with statements like, "You are always criticizing me." It's better to say, "You sometimes criticize the work I do in a way that I don't like." Avoid ridiculing the other person, and don't be overly dramatic.

b. Express - Express how this behavior or situation makes you feel. Be as specific as possible. Put your statements in terms like, "I feel lonely when that happens." It's better to say, "I feel embarrassed when you do that," than to criticize the person with attacking statements like, "You are insensitive."

c. Specify - Say as specifically as possible what you need to see changed. Avoid should or ought ("You should do such and such") because they sound preachy. A straight statement is better. For example, "I want you to start coming home before midnight." Be reasonable. Don't ask for the moon. Ask for agreement with your request.

d. Consequences

(1) State the positive things that will happen if the person does what you want. Make sure your reward is something the person wants. Often your thanks or your continued regard for the other person is enough. Sometimes it isn't, and a more tangible reward is necessary, like an allowance increase, a pay raise, or an evening out.

(2) If necessary, state the negative or bad consequence that will happen if he or she doesn't do what you want. Often the bad consequence can be left unsaid. Your bad consequence, whether or not you find you need to state it, should be something you are realistically willing to carry out. Don't threaten what you can't or won't deliver. Only state your bad consequence if you must.

Often, you must be willing to bargain or negotiate over the last two steps, Specify and Consequences. You may need to barter for time by saying, "I'd like to think about that for a while." Don't agree to anything unless you feel you are getting a satisfactory deal (or at least that you're not dissatisfied with the deal). Remember, only use your bad consequence as a last resort.

Examples of DESC Scripts:

a. *A conflict over housework*

Describe - Since I'm working full-time, it's very hard for me to do all the housework and take full responsibility for the kids as well. You work fewer hours than I do, yet you don't do any of the housework or child care, except for taking Billy to baseball practice once a week.

Express - I find myself getting more and more exhausted and less and less able to do a good job, either at home or at work. I'm also starting to feel resentful of the fact that you have more free time than I do, but you do less housework.

Specify - I want us to sit down together and divide up household and family responsibilities on a more equal basis.

Consequences - *Positive:* If you'll agree to this, I'll feel better about your contribution and I'll be a lot easier to live with. I'll also have some energy to do fun things with you once in a while.

(Negative: If you won't agree, I'll be even more resentful and I'll have less respect for your sense of fairness. I'll also be too exhausted to spend much relaxed time with you.)

b. *Dealing with a landlord*

Describe - Our heater has been broken for a week and you still haven't sent anyone to fix it, though I've called you four times. I've got a sick baby on my hands and the house is only a little above freezing.

Express - I'm angry that you haven't sent the repairperson. I'm also very concerned about my baby daughter.

Specify - I want you to get the repairperson over here before 10 tomorrow morning and I want the heater fixed by the time I get home from work.

Consequences - *Positive:* If you do this, I will be most appreciative.

(Negative: If you stall beyond tomorrow on getting this job done, I will immediately bring this matter to the attention of the housing board.)

c. *Problems with a nursing home*

Describe - I'm very concerned about the treatment my father is getting in your nursing home. He's so drugged he can hardly speak, and I have evidence that he is being neglected and mistreated by your staff.

Express - I am appalled and angry that you could let such things go on with helpless patients.

Specify - I want his medication changed so he can behave more normally. I also want you to make sure that neglect and mistreatment of patients stops immediately.

Consequences - *Positive:* If the situation improves, I will let the matter drop.

(Negative: If it doesn't improve, I will call in a lawyer.)

d. *Some situations require only a part of the DESC format; the other parts are understood. In this situation, a person has pushed in front of another person in line. The assertive script might go this way (the parts in parentheses would most likely go unsaid):*

Describe - I was in front of you (and now you're butting in ahead of me).

Express - (This makes me pretty annoyed.)

Specify - I'd appreciate it if you'd take your proper place in the line.

Consequences - *Positive:* (If you do what I say, I'll forgive you for butting in in the first place.)
(Negative: If you don't do what I say, you'll earn my disapproval and that of the other people around us in the line.)

Exercise:

The class "brainstorms"--that is, solves collectively--conflict situations they'd like to be able to deal with more assertively. The workshop coordinator writes down all suggestions on the board.

Example:

1. Some man in my town is spreading untrue rumors about me and I want him to stop doing this.

2. Men bother me in the street and it makes me angry. I'd like to confront them about it.

3. My mother keeps telling me how to raise my kids. I want her to stop doing this.

After you've thought of a number of situations, break up into small groups of about six people each. Each group should pick several conflict situations and write DESC scripts for them. Then you should practice delivering (reading) them to each other. One person should play the assertive person and one should play the person whose behavior was the reason for writing the script in the first place. Remember to:

1. Deal with one issue at a time.

2. Stick to the point; don't let the person you are confronting get you off the subject.

3. Use the DESC method.

The small groups should work together to make their scripts and role playing effective.

After you've done several scripts, come back to the whole group and present your most successful role play. The class should comment on how well it works.

CONCLUSION

This has been only the briefest of introductions to assertiveness training. There are a number of important topics that have not been touched on, for example, speaking up in public, stress management, body language, and coping with people who try to get you off the assertive track. It is strongly recommended that you look into this subject more deeply, either by reading one of the resource books listed below or by taking a full-length course in assertiveness. Many adult education or continuing education programs offer such courses at relatively low cost.

RESOURCES

Alberti, Robert E., and Emmons, Michael L. Your Perfect Right, rev. ed. San Luis Obispo, Calif.: Impact Publishers, 1974.

This book deals mainly with the skills of defending one's beliefs and actions. Very easy to read.

Bloom, Lynn Z.; Coburn, Karen; and Pearlman, Joan. The New Assertive Woman. New York: Delacorte Press, 1975.

This how-to manual built around a personal "bill of rights" is designed for fast, easy reading.

Bower, Sharon Anthony, and Bower, Gordon H. Asserting Yourself: A Practical Guide for Positive Change. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1976.

A very useful book, with sections on diagnosing your present degree of assertiveness, improving self-esteem, coping with stress, DESC scripting (developed by Sharon Anthony Bower), practicing assertive body language, dealing with people who are trying to get you off the track, developing assertive replies, and making friends.

Bower, Sharon Anthony. Painless Public Speaking: How to Deliver Your Train-of-Thought, Any Place, Any Time. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980.

This book is specifically aimed at helping people learn how to organize, practice, and remember their trains of thought, whether a full-blown speech or just a point they want to make. It gives suggestions for helping people take control of nervousness and stage fright so that they can speak more effectively in front of a group.

Fensterheim, Herbert, and Baer, Jean. Don't Say Yes When You Want to Say No. New York: David McKay, 1975.

This book covers a useful range of subjects: assertiveness in social, personal, and job settings; goal setting; and self-control.

Phelps, Stanlee, and Austin, Nancy. The Assertive Woman. San Luis Obispo, Calif.: Impact Publishers, 1975.

How assertiveness can be applied to the particular concerns of women in a changing world.

Stone, Janet, and Bachner, Jane. Speaking Up: A Book for Every Woman Who Wants to Speak Effectively. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

An excellent book which includes sections on overcoming fear; writing, practicing, and delivering a speech; answering difficult questions; and using public speaking skills in many aspects of life.

Chapter 3 - Dealing With Stress
Time Management
Decision Making

OBJECTIVE: To learn ways to cope better with stress. To learn to manage time better and to practice systematic decision making.

DEALING WITH STRESS

An event that is stressful is one that causes physical or emotional tension. It may be a hard day at work, your children giving you trouble, having an argument with your boyfriend, or having to push your way through a crowded subway car. Maybe it's worrying about an exam, or money, or your health. Some of the symptoms of stress are speeded up pulse, sweating, headaches, fear, depression, nausea, tenseness, or just plain tiredness. There are an almost unlimited number of things, big and little, that can cause stress in our lives.

Today, doctors and others are looking much more seriously at stress. There is strong evidence that stress contributes to heart disease, ulcers, depression, and a number of other physical and mental illnesses, as well as a lower life expectancy. Not surprisingly, people without much money tend to be under greater stress than people with money. Women are under more stress than men, and blacks are under more stress than whites. Stress is not necessarily always bad. At the beginning of a race, it is what gets the adrenaline going, and often it is stress that makes us do a good job. However, stress has to be controlled in order for it to be a positive, rather than a destructive, force in our lives.

What can you do to relieve stress? The most obvious answer would be to get rid of those things in your life that cause stress. However, in many cases that's not possible. Often it's the things and people that are closest and most important to us that cause us the most stress. Besides, in order to cut out all stress, you'd really have to stop living. But if you can't cut out stress, there are things you can do to control it. Here two women talk about what they do to relieve stress:

> "I'm working at a job I don't particularly like, with people who don't respect me. I'd like to get another job, but for a variety of reasons, that's not possible right now. What I do to get over my frustration is that every day at lunchtime I go for a brisk walk along the seashore near our office. I come back to the office feeling much more relaxed."
>
> -Maureen

"I've got three little ones aged two, four, and five, whom I'm raising on my own. Sometimes it all seems too much. What I've recently started doing is that once a week I leave them off with a babysitter for about six hours. During that time I relax and do things I enjoy. I haven't got much money, but getting a few hours off makes the whole week easier to take, and I think that's important. So I put aside money for the babysitter, and I call it my 'mental health fund.'"

-Irma

In order to control stress, you have to take time to relax. It's sometimes hard for women to find time for themselves, because they tend to work longer hours and have less free time than men. This is especially true for the woman who is holding down two jobs, one paid job and one mothering/homemaking job. In addition, many women actually feel guilty when they take time for themselves. It's important to get rid of these guilt feelings and realize that when you are under less stress, the rest of your family is also under less stress.

You should work especially hard to relieve stress when you're going through difficult transitions in your life--say, looking for a job or coping with a divorce. Here are some often-used methods for relieving stress:

Physical Exercise is one of the best stress relievers around, and there's something for almost everyone, from sports like softball or soccer to jogging, swimming, or modern dance. Look for a cheap or free form of exercise at a local YWCA or recreation department, or with friends.

Deep Relaxation, of which there are various forms; among the best known are Transcendental Meditation and biofeedback. Many people have found these to be invaluable in relieving stress. Unfortunately, they cost money to learn, and biofeedback requires a machine.

Vacations, either short (a few hours) or long, make a real difference. Regardless of the job you're doing, try to find some time really to relax and enjoy yourself. Take a few mental health days if you've got the leave coming to you.

Physical Intimacy with another person can be an important way to relieve stress. Uninterrupted time spent with your children can also help relieve stress.

Taking an Hour each day just to relax is a great stress reliever.

Talking about Your Troubles, which you can do with friends (don't overburden them, though) or in a support group, if you can find one that fits your needs.

Counseling. When stress gets to be too much to handle and you feel it is endangering your emotional health, counseling might be the answer.

Both individual and group counseling are available, and sometimes there are sliding fees. Don't be afraid to shop around for a counselor in whom you have confidence; after all, it's your emotional well-being that's at stake.

Pampering Yourself. When you're going through hard times or facing a big challenge in your life, reward yourself for your efforts. Buy yourself a present or take yourself to a movie. Be good to yourself.

Discussion:

Break into small groups of about six each and discuss:

1. How do I relieve stress in my life? Does it work, or do I need more time to relax?

2. Do I feel guilty when I take time for myself?

3. Do pills (tranquilizers, etc.) and alcohol have a role in relieving stress? If so, is this role positive or negative?

MANAGING TIME TO RELIEVE STRESS

It's easy to get depressed when you're trying to pick up the pieces of your life. It's one thing just to be looking for a job, but looking for a job, trying to find a place to stay for yourself and your children, dealing with rude and unhelpful agency people, looking for day care, being flat broke, and worrying about child custody all at the same time can be so overwhelming that it can lead to total inaction and emotional paralysis.

There are no perfect solutions, but these suggestions may help:

1. When you have a busy day ahead of you, make a list of everything that has to get done and carry it with you. Check things off when they're finished. This lets you know you are getting things done and makes you feel better about yourself.

2. Daily calendar books can also be used to tell you when you have to be where. Get into the habit of carrying yours with you always.

3. If you have children, start giving them things to do (housework and so on). This teaches them to take responsibility and makes them feel important and needed. It also gives you less to do.

4. Make time to get support from friends, family, or a support group. Also, set aside times to do things you like with and without your children. You deserve some rewards for everything you're going through.

5. When you have a lot of calls to make (say you're looking for apartments for rent), make a deal with yourself to call ten every day. Then do it. That way, you won't get overwhelmed at the total number of calls you may have to make, yet you will feel you are getting something done. Cut big jobs into smaller chunks.

6. Get the frustrating or annoying things over with early, preferably in the morning.

DECISION MAKING

Exercise:

Often, the hardest part of making a decision is getting in touch with what the problem is. The person in this story knows something is wrong, but she can't figure out exactly what. Working together, the class will follow along and help with the decision-making process.

> Barbara is a divorced woman who is supporting herself and two daughters. She works a 9-to-5 job in a department store and is taking a bookkeeping course and a beginning accounting course at a nearby community college. She hopes to get a better job when she has learned some accounting, but right now she worries a lot about money. Lately, she has been losing control of her temper when she's with her kids. This doesn't happen all the time, but it's happened often enough to scare her, as well as her daughters. Several times she's found herself screaming things at her daughters that she doesn't really mean, and twice she's hit them hard enough to leave bad bruises. She's always really sorry afterwards.

STEP 1: *Decide what you want*

Barbara thinks for a while. Then she decides, "I want to stop losing my temper with my kids. I want to stop being afraid of what I'll do to them." Barbara knows that to get what she wants, she needs to make some changes in her life, but she's confused about what the real problem is. She decides to think things through more carefully.

STEP 2: *Describe the situation that is bothering you*

Barbara describes briefly the times she lost control of her temper. She puts down the day and time, her feelings, other things that might have been worrying her, and anything else she thinks might be important.

1. "Yesterday (Thursday), I got home at 9:30 from my accounting class. The dishes weren't done and the leftovers hadn't even been put away. I just completely lost it. That was when I threw the Coke

bottle at Lila. I was really tired and I guess I just couldn't face housework after working all day and going to that class at night. They really should have done the dishes, but also, I overreacted."

2. "Last week--was it Thursday?--June was complaining again at supper because I wouldn't buy her a new coat for this school year. I got so upset I started screaming insults at her and finally I just grabbed my books and practically ran out the door for class. Thinking about it now, I guess I felt hurt and resentful because I'm taking this class so I can make more money and get us more of the things we want."

3. "The other day I was feeling real depressed because I was passed over again for my raise, plus I got a 'C' on that accounting exam that I studied so hard for. I wish that accounting class was easier. I'm glad I'm doing okay on the bookkeeping. Anyway, when I got home, Lila and June were both in a bad temper because I never spend any time with them and they were bored. It seemed like everything came together into this crazy fury about how unfair it all was, and I really took it out on them in a way that scared me."

STEP 3: *Look for patterns/define the problem*

Barbara looks for things that are common to, or similar about, all or almost all the times when she loses her temper. You don't have all the information she does, but already you can pick out some patterns in these three episodes that Barbara herself might not have noticed until she thought carefully about each one.

Write down patterns you see in these three episodes. Also, write down anything else you think might be useful in figuring out what Barbara's problem really is. This can be done on this page or on a blackboard.

STEP 4: *Think up solutions*

When Barbara finished defining her problem, she realized she had an important decision to make. Based on <u>your</u> definition of the problem, what do you think that is?

_____

_____

_____

Barbara will go through one more step to decide this question. In the meantime, though, she's thought of some other things she should do <u>regardless</u> of what she decides on the big question. Having defined the problem with her, what suggestions would you make to Barbara for ways to improve her situation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

STEP 5: *Decide among alternatives*

Here is how Barbara decides on whether or not to quit her accounting class. See how much you can fill in for her.

<u>Choice A</u>: Quit the accounting class.

Plus	Minus

Choice B: Keep taking the accounting class and work harder to get the children's understanding and support.

Plus	Minus

CONCLUSION

The only person who can really make the final decision is Barbara herself. It may be that she can continue taking the class, and work things out with the help of her children. Or it may be that the class is the "straw that's breaking the camel's back." Maybe things would improve if she took it next term, instead. It is not up to us to decide, though we can have our opinions about what she should do.

The purpose of this section was to show systematic, careful decision making. You may never use this process exactly in the way it was presented here, but its parts are still useful. To summarize:

1. Decide what you want.
2. Describe the situation that is bothering you.
3. Look for patterns/define the problem.
4. Think up solutions.
5. Decide among alternatives.

Chapter 4 - Money

OBJECTIVE: To inventory your money management skills. To learn about credit, public assistance, budgeting, money values, and ways to save money. To practice being assertive in money matters.

> "The most devastating part of being widowed was suddenly having to take care of my own finances. At my age it might seem funny, but I'd never even balanced a checkbook. My husband handled all our accounts, dealt with the mortgage, the insurance, everything. Then suddenly, I was on my own with huge medical bills to pay and taxes due, and I couldn't even establish my own credit so I could take out a loan."
>
> -Wilma, age 50

Many women find themselves in this situation after a separation, a divorce, or the death of a spouse. There are few things in life more terrifying than the feeling of utter helplessness that comes over a woman when she has to deal with complex money matters for the first time.

Plenty of women who have been supporting themselves for years don't handle their finances well, either. And these days, more and more married women are realizing that they have a responsibility to themselves and to their families to learn to handle money better. This means not only budgeting well in the present, but also planning for the future. What if they were suddenly on their own? Are they prepared to talk to lawyers about money? Do they understand insurance policies, mortgages, and loans? Do they know how to balance a checkbook and keep track of their expenditures? Do they know how to prepare an income tax return? Do they know what the family's average monthly income is?

Task:

Fill out this inventory on money. (This is for your own use only. Be as truthful as you can.)

1. Do you have a separate checking account in your own name? Yes___ No___

2. Do you have a separate savings account in your own name? Yes___ No___

3. Have you ever held a wage-paying job? Yes___No___

4. Do you do your own budgeting, or have you done budgeting in the past? Yes___No___

5. If so, are you satisfied with the way you keep your books? Yes___No___

6. Have you established credit in your own name? Yes___No___

7. Have you ever taken out a loan in your own name? Yes___No___

8. Do you know what your (or your family's) average monthly income is (yearly wages, rents, dividends, and other funds, divided by 12)? Yes___No___

9. Do you know what your average monthly expenditures are? Yes___ No___

10. Do you have experience with and feel confident about:

    a. Balancing a checkbook? Yes___No___

    b. Preparing income tax returns? Yes___No___

    c. Negotiating a loan? Yes___No___

    d. Paying your bills on time? Yes___No___

    e. Holding your own with lawyers or accountants? Yes___No___

    f. Not spending more money than you have? Yes___No___

    g. Handling credit cards responsibly? Yes___No___

    h. Understanding insurance policies, mortgages, pensions, and retirement funds? Yes___No___

    i. Investing money wisely? Yes___No___

If you are married or living with another adult:

11. Do you know how much money your partner makes? Yes___No___

12. Have you or your partner made wills? Yes___No___

13. If your partner has made a will, do you know what is in it? Yes___No___

14. Are you the one who deals with most money matters, accounts, etc., in your household? Yes___No___

15. Are you acquainted with all the different types of insurance policies you and your partner have? Yes___No___

16. Do you participate fully in budget decisions? Yes___No___

17. If you work outside the home, do you have complete control over the money you bring home? Yes___No___

18. Do you know what benefits you would be entitled to if your partner died or was disabled (pensions, etc.)? Yes___No___

19. Are you fairly knowledgeable about investments (stocks, bonds, etc.)? Yes___No___

20. Are you fairly knowledgeable about your state laws regarding distribution of properties after a spouse's death? Yes___No___

HOW TO BE A BETTER MONEY MANAGER

Improving your ability to manage money isn't something you can do overnight. Your first step is to admit that you need improvement. Look over your inventory on money management once more. How many times did you answer yes? How many times did you answer no? Do you think you would be a more confident person if you could answer yes to every question?

You're better off if you learn about money management before you're hit with a crisis. However, it's human nature not to want to deal with complicated matters until we're absolutely forced to, so if you are finding yourself in a bind right now, don't blame yourself too much. A lot of other people are in the same bind, and at least you're doing something about it. Here are some ways to get over that helpless feeling:

1. Read some books on money management. There are a number of cheap, easy-to-read paperbacks available for the person who doesn't have much prior knowledge of money. There are also money books written just for women and more especially, for women who are recently widowed or divorced. Most money books contain definitions of terms as well as advice on handling your money. Several books are listed at the end of this chapter, but you don't necessarily have to stick with them. The best course of action when you're in a bookstore or library is to browse through several books on the subject and get the ones that are easiest for you to understand, or which speak directly to your needs. Look in the women's section in bookstores as well as in the finance section. Ask the salesperson for assistance if you can't find the kind of book you need.

2. Take a course in personal finance at a local community college. Some colleges have several courses at different levels, so pick the one that fits your needs. These courses are generally very cheap and you don't usually need a high school degree to take them.

3. If you are opening checking and savings accounts for the first time, pick up a pamphlet from your bank on how to balance a checkbook. Keep up-to-date on balancing your checkbook and you will save yourself a lot of trouble later on. Sometimes it's a good idea to find someone you know who is good at keeping accounts to show you how to balance your checkbook properly. Be sure to pick someone who is sympathetic to your desire to learn better money management. Balancing a checkbook is really quite easy once you get the hang of it.

If your checking account is completely messed up (you've forgotten to write down your checks, don't know how much money you have, etc.), don't spend time agonizing about it. Close out the account and open a new one under a different account number. Start off with a clean slate, and this time do it right.

4. If you're uncertain about your math skills, it might be a good idea to get yourself a cheap electronic calculator. This can speed up checkbook balancing and other figuring a great deal. You can buy a calculator for under $15 that adds, subtracts, multiplies, divides, and does percentages. It will take you about an hour to learn how to do all these operations on your calculator, and maybe a week to feel confident about it. Look for these things in a calculator:

   a. A number display panel you can read easily.

   b. A warranty or guarantee of at least 90 days, and preferably a year.

   c. Easy-to-understand directions. (Get someone to help you if you're having difficulty understanding them.)

   Don't bother getting a really complicated calculator with dozens of different functions. That's a waste of money if you're using it only for budgeting purposes. All you really need are addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

CREDIT

Establish credit in your own name. That way, if you are divorced or widowed and have large debts, you will be able to get loans. Many women rely for years on their husbands' credit-worthiness. Once they are on their own, though, they find they have to start from scratch to build up their own reputation as good credit risks. Unfortunately, periods of crisis are the worst times to try to establish yourself as a good credit risk. Also, they're often the times when you need big loans quickly. Don't get caught without credit of your own.

Until quite recently, creditors could make it very difficult for women to establish their own credit. Often, women were refused credit altogether, or they were given lower credit ceilings than men with the same income. With the passage of the Federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act in 1975, discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, race, religion, national origin, age, or receipt of public assistance benefits was declared illegal. This act covers all organizations that extend credit, including banks and other lending institutions, department stores, credit card companies, and medical facilities.

So how do you get credit? Basically, by proving that you are willing and able to pay your bills. Though credit institutions are no longer permitted

to take sex or marital status into account, they can and will take into account the following:

1. Your total income, including alimony or support payments, if you have listed them in your assets (you don't have to).

2. Your current outstanding debts.

3. Whether or not you are employed, and how long you have been at your latest job (changing jobs too often looks bad).

4. How long you have lived where you are now living.

5. Whether you have a steady income.

6. Whether you have a bank account.

7. Whether you pay your bills on time.

8. Whether you already have credit elsewhere in your own name.

Every credit institution has different guidelines for who gets credit. It's a good idea to find out what these are. Credit-granting institutions are now required to tell you why you weren't granted credit. Check over these reasons carefully. If they don't make sense, write or call and complain. If you suspect that you are being discriminated against, keep copies of all correspondence with the credit institution and keep notes on all phone conversations. Complain first to the institution itself; then if you don't get satisfaction, complain to your local credit association, National Organization for Women chapter, Human Rights Commission, or the Federal Trade Commission.

As a general rule, when applying for credit, start small. Apply first for the kinds of credit that are easiest to get. Among these are charge cards or accounts at local department stores, and gas credit cards if you own a car. You should only try applying for major credit cards like MasterCard or Visa after you have established good credit on the local level. Keep in mind that you pay, in the long run, for the convenience of buying on credit. You are, in effect, borrowing from the credit-granting organization and it, in turn, will charge you high interest rates, often 18 percent per year, or more. This means that if you run up a $500 bill, you will have to pay back nearly $100 in interest above and beyond the original $500 if you take a year to repay your debt. Obviously, you will save a great deal of money if you pay your credit card bills the first month they are due.

For step-by-step directions on how to obtain credit, write for one of the pamphlets listed at the end of this chapter, or pick up a pamphlet on credit at your local credit bureau or chamber of commerce. Once you've got a good credit rating, take care of it. It will be even harder (if not impossible) to built it up a second time. Pay your bills on time. Don't carry too many accounts all at once. Credit is not a license to spend wildly. If you're having problems disciplining yourself, get help. Go to a debt counselor (many banks have them), or look for a consumer credit counseling service in your community. These people can help you get out of trouble and learn to plan better in the future.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Public assistance includes a variety of programs which have different names and different guidelines, depending on which state administers them. You may run into any or all of the following terms:

- Welfare
- ADC (Aid to Dependent Children)
- AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children)
- Income Maintenance Programs
- Veterans Assistance Services
- Food Stamps
- Medicaid (Medical Assistance Program)
- Home Relief
- General Relief
- Various programs for the handicapped

Public assistance may take the form of:

- Checks which come on a regular basis
- Food coupons
- Free medical services
- Emergency grants
- Distribution of certain types of food

It is very much to your advantage to know what programs are available in your state and who is eligible. Be realistic about public assistance. Try not to let embarrassment or other people's prejudices keep you from getting the help your family needs. There's absolutely no reason why you should respect yourself less because you receive some sort of public assistance.

You should know that people who work for public assistance agencies, like the officials in any other big bureaucracy, can be rude, unhelpful, and disrespectful. (This isn't true of all welfare workers, of course.) Sometimes it seems as if public assistance programs are set up to make you feel like a child instead of a self-respecting adult. When you apply for welfare or other programs, it's important to keep reminding yourself that you <u>are</u> an adult, and that you <u>are</u> every bit as good as the person on the other side of the desk.

When you go to apply for public assistance, the following hints are helpful:

1. If possible, find out what programs are available and what the eligibility requirements are <u>before</u> you are actually interviewed. Look for pamphlets on public assistance. Sometimes these are available in the places where you go to apply, or a local welfare advocacy organization may have some. Talk to other people who are on public assistance about the interview process and the advantages and disadvantages of different programs.

2. Be polite, but assertive, with the officials you have to speak to. Always ask the reason for any rejection.

3. Fill in forms accurately and neatly.

4. Be early when you go for an interview.

5. Find out before you go what sorts of documents are required. These differ from agency to agency and state to state, but the following may be asked for (probably not all at any one place, luckily):

   a. Rent receipt for the current month
   b. Gas and electric bills
   c. Apartment lease (if applicable)
   d. Medical statements or bills (if applicable)
   e. Marriage certificate (if applicable)
   f. Divorce or separation papers (if applicable)
   g. Child custody orders (if applicable)
   h. Birth certificates for children (if applicable)
   i. IRS Tax Form 1040 and/or Form W-2 (if applicable)
   j. Proof of school attendance (if applicable)
   k. Financial aid statement (if applicable)
   l. Social Security card
   m. Permanent residence card (if you are a resident alien)
   n. U.S. citizenship papers (if you are a naturalized American)
   o. Bankbooks (savings and checking accounts)
   p. Proof of court-ordered payments, child support and/or alimony (if applicable)
   q. Proof of Social Security award (if any)
   r. Proof of monthly income

It's clear from the above list that being on public assistance doesn't leave you much privacy. If you feel you are entitled to aid, but you are turned down, you can usually ask for a review or fair hearing of your case. If that still doesn't work, you can challenge the decision in court.

Often it helps to join a welfare union or other welfare advocacy group. These are organizations of people on public assistance who come together to improve the public assistance system and win better treatment for people receiving aid. You can find out about such groups by looking in the phone book, asking other people on public assistance, asking at your local legal aid office, or checking with neighborhood associations and other community groups. If there is no welfare advocacy group in your area, maybe you should start one.

BEING ASSERTIVE ABOUT MONEY MATTERS

May just got her first job, and she wants to set up her own separate checking and savings account in which to put a portion of the money she makes. She wants to apply for credit in her own name in the future. Her husband doesn't like this idea.

Louise is trying to get her husband to make a will. She knows that if he doesn't, and if something happens to him, she and the children will lose a lot of time and money in probate court, and she may have to give up their home. Her husband keeps saying he doesn't want to think about things like that.

Marylou's husband recently died, and she is trying to get his financial affairs in order. Every time she has to see the lawyer, she comes home feeling totally confused. He seems to expect her to know all the legal words and he never really explains all the papers he's always asking her to sign. The whole thing makes her feel that the situation is out of her control.

As always when you're trying to be assertive, get in your mind in advance exactly what it is you want, and why. In money matters it's very important to have your facts in order. May should make it clear to her husband that she needs to have control over her own money, just as he has control over his. She should explain why it is important for her to have credit in her own name, and how that could benefit him as well. (Suppose he were disabled and couldn't work and they needed a loan? Suppose his credit weren't very good?)

Exercise:

Break up into small groups of about six people each. Take the above three cases and plan an assertive speech for each situation. If you want, you can use the DESC script format, or you can state your case in some other assertive way.

For Louise's case, ask yourself, "Where can I find information about what happens when people die without having made a will?" For Marylou's case, ask yourself, "What will I do if this lawyer doesn't agree to what I ask?" Role play being assertive in these two situations.

Afterward, report to the class on what your small group did (or role play for the whole class).

BUDGETING

Budgeting means planning how you can best use the money you have to get the things you most want and need. Your budget is your guide to how much money you have and what it has to be spent on. Some events that may affect budgeting are:

1. Getting fired or laid off from your job (or your partner's getting fired or laid off)

2. An illness or death in the family

3. Taking a trip

4. Someone in your family going to school

5. Buying a house or car

6. Getting a raise or inheriting some money

7. The failure of the welfare department to get your check to you

If you have budgeted well, you can often take these changes in stride. With a budget, you try to plan ahead so you can tell what you can or cannot do. You also use budgeting to keep track of what you've spent and how much money you have left at any given time. When you know these things, it is easier to control your spending and keep money troubles away from your door.

Task:

Make a budget for yourself and your family for this next month, estimating how much you will spend on things if you don't know exactly. If you do this from month to month, you might use receipts from the last month to make your estimates.

BUDGET

Beginning Date_____Ending Date_____

Monthly take-home income (to get your monthly income, add up your net annual income from all sources, and divide by 12)_____

	COST
Rent or mortgage payments	_____
Food	_____
Electricity	_____
Fuel	_____
Water	_____
Telephone	_____
Sanitation	_____

	COST
Transportation (include gasoline, car payments, repairs and insurance, bus or subway fares)	_____
Clothes	_____
Medical expenses	_____
Retirement fund	_____
Insurance (other than for car)	_____
Education expenses	_____
Career-related expenses	_____
Miscellaneous household expenses, including repairs	_____
Entertainment and relaxation	_____
Donations and gifts	_____
Other	_____
Other	_____
Total Average Monthly Expenses	_____

Subtract your average monthly expenses from your average monthly income. How much, if any, money do you have left over? How much, if any, of your money goes into savings or investments each month?_____

BUDGETING/MONEY VALUES

How we spend our money depends on the things we value. Identifying those values can sometimes be a difficult task, and coming to an agreement with other family members may be even harder. If you really want to buy life insurance and your partner wants to save for a house, what do you do? If you want to save for your children's college expenses, but your partner believes in spending money now because "you can't take it with you," who wins out?

Most people do not have money for everything they need and want. However, most people, if they can, try to distribute their budgets among necessities, long-term plans, short-term interests, and funds for emergencies.

Discussing your budget values with other members of your family is very important. Sometimes you may have to compromise or put off what you want until later, but don't get into the habit of always being the one who has to make the sacrifice. Work for an equal voice in decision making about money.

Task:

Complete the following values inventory.

HOW I WANT TO SPEND MY MONEY

Assume you had food, lodging, and basic necessities (clothes, etc.) paid for, and you had an opportunity to save money for one other thing. What would it be? Order your priorities from 1 to 16, with 1 being the most important.

_____Education - yours

_____Education - your partner's

_____Education - your children's

_____A car

_____A house (or paying off a mortgage)

_____Job training - yours

_____Paying off all your debts

_____A vacation trip

_____A TV set

_____Medical expenses

_____A boat

_____Starting a business or a nonprofit organization

_____Medical or life insurance

_____Saving for emergencies that might come up

_____Day-to-day things that are fun

_____Retirement

_____Other_____ _____ Other_____

_____Other_____ Other_____

Complete:

Do you have any extra money right now? _____

If so, what do you use it for? _____

Is that what you want most? _____

Could you have money to save if you budgeted better (that is, if you cut down on buying small things you don't need and don't even want very much)?

Discussion:

Break into small groups of about six people each, and discuss the following questions:

1. Do married people need to have the same money values? What happens if they don't? What are some ways to compromise?

2. If you are married or share finances with someone, do you agree on money matters most of the time?

In your values inventory, you discovered some of the things that are most important to you. Assuming you have a broader sense now of what you want, you are ready to find ways to save money toward that goal.

SAVING MONEY

To be successful at saving, you need to be disciplined. Some people buy everything they think they need each month out of their incomes, then save the rest. Some months this amounts to nothing. The best way to save is to resolve to put away a certain amount every month before you do all your other buying. Another way to look at it is to think of your savings as a "fixed" expense each month. Of course, saving isn't really an expense, since the money you save actually earns interest for you. However, you have to take saving almost as seriously as you do paying your rent or making a monthly mortgage payment. Have a minimum amount that you put aside each month.

Important: Don't keep your savings in a checking acount; they don't earn any interest that way. Don't store your savings in your house, either; they're too likely to get stolen or destroyed, and they don't accumulate interest. While you need to be disciplined in order to save, you shouldn't make saving an end in itself. Particularly in times of serious inflation, it may not be to your advantage to put away large sums of money in accounts that earn very little interest. What are you saving for? If you are saving pennies for an emergency fund to use if someone in your family gets sick, ask yourself whether you might not improve the quality of your life by buying a good medical insurance policy and using the money you would have put away to buy your children warmer clothes or to take a trip. Don't defer all pleasures to the future if you can possibly help it. The present is important, too.

A word on investments: Be very careful. Investigate thoroughly before putting your money into anything, regardless of who's trying to sell it to you. Times when you're going through serious personal crises are the very worst times to make any major financial commitments. Financial hucksters have traditionally preyed upon single women (especially older women), because they think they're easy to take advantage of. The stories you read in the newspapers about old women (and some young ones) being cheated out of their life savings are true. Don't let anyone capitalize on your grief, confusion, or relative ignorance about money matters. That's another good reason for learning more about money.

Your personal habits can also make a difference in how much you spend. Check which of the following you think you could do, but remember that these are not ways to save unless you put away the money. Some of these money-saving ideas take a lot of time. If your time is worth money, they may not really add up to a saving in the long run.

Food

- Purchase store brands rather than name brands. Comparison shop.
- Compare weight, size, and cost.
- Buy by the case if you can get a discount.
- Buy foods on sale. If you have a large family, try getting things wholesale.
- Cut your own meat, or stop eating meat altogether (but make sure your diet provides the nutrients you need).
- Use money-saving coupons.
- Grow a vegetable garden.
- Preserve and freeze your own food.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Housing

- Rent only what you can afford.
- Ask the landlord if you can do some upkeep for a rent deduction.
- Purchase a house you can afford.
- Do your own home repairs.
- Insulate your home to save on heating bills.
- Save on utility costs by burning wood or turning the heat down and wearing sweaters.
- Call the city planning office and ask about grant monies or tax incentives for fuel-saving home improvements.
- Make long-distance calls at off-hours when the rates are low.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Furniture and Appliances

- Buy secondhand furniture and appliances at auctions, garage sales, or secondhand stores.
- Repair your own furniture and appliances.
- Make your own furniture, curtains, etc. (remember, though, that tools can be expensive).
- Purchase only necessary items.
- Trade furniture with people you know.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Clothing

- Make your own clothes.
- Buy clothing on sale.
- Buy secondhand clothing.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Transportation

- Use the car only when necessary, or sell your car.
- Learn how to repair and service your own car.
- Pump your own gas at a self-service pump (gas is cheaper there).
- Take buses whenever you can.
- Use car pools.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Recreation

- Find free recreation in your community through museums, community schools, libraries, and parks and recreation departments.
- Join organizations that concern themselves with subjects of interest to you.
- Have potluck suppers.
- Eat at cheaper restaurants, and eat out only on special occasions.
- Your ideas _____

_____

Discussion:

Break up into small groups and discuss the following questions:

What does it mean to say, "We have an equal voice in matters of money"?
What things are most important:

1. Each partner having an equal say about what joint savings are used for?

2. Both partners having some money that is considered theirs alone to do with what they will?

3. Both partners getting paid a set amount for doing their jobs, regardless of whether they are working in the home (cleaning, organizing, taking care of children, etc.) or outside the home in a wage-paying job?

4. Each partner being able to look forward to financial security if the other partner dies or is disabled?

5. Each partner having a relatively good grasp of money matters, so both can contribute to decision making and both can deal with the finances if the other person dies or is disabled?

6. Other?

RESOURCES

Antoniak, Helen; Scott, Nancy Lynch; and Worcester, Nancy. Alone: Emotional, Legal, and Financial Help for the Widowed or Divorced Woman. Millbrae, Calif.: Les Femmes Publishing, 1979; about $6.95.

Chapters on choosing an attorney, widowhood (including what to do if your husband dies without making a will), credit, investments, insurance, and much more.

Nelson, Paula. The Joy of Money. New York: Stein and Day, 1975; about $2.95.

A guide for women trying to gain financial independence.

Porter, Sylvia. Sylvia Porter's Money Book. New York: Doubleday, 1975.

One of the best-selling money books of all time. It contains clear, readable information on personal and family finances, and is an excellent all-purpose reference.

Thal, Helen M. "Developing Your Financial Management Skills." In New Life Options: A Working Woman's Resource Book, edited by Rosalind K. Loring and Herbert A. Otto. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.

This book also contains a chapter called "Legal Rights and Prospects: Property, Inheritance and Credit," by Riane Tenenhaus Eisler. Good advice on budgeting and credit, but unfortunately, the book costs $10.95. Look for it in the library.

"Women, Credit Bureaus and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act."

A very good short pamphlet on women and credit in a question-and-answer format. Write to Associated Credit Bureaus, Inc., 6767 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074.

"Women and Credit Histories."

How to go about developing a good credit history. Write to the Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.

UNIT II-Education

Chapter 1 - High School Equivalency

OBJECTIVE: To learn about high school equivalency diplomas and how to get one.

What is GED? GED means General Education Development. It is especially designed for people who left school before obtaining their high school diplomas. A GED certificate is recognized nationwide as the legal equivalent of a degree given by a high school. To get a GED certificate, you take a high school equivalency test. This test is designed and processed by the federal government, but it is also subject to your own state's requirements. Passing the GED test tells people that you can understand and read English and do basic math at the level of the average high school graduate. There are five parts to the GED test:

1. Writing Skills
2. Social Studies
3. Science
4. Reading Skills
5. Mathematics

Who is Eligible? Where Can I Get a GED Certificate? Any adult who needs a high school diploma is eligible. You should check with your local GED office to find out what the age limit is. Generally, there is a lower limit of 18 years of age and no upper limit at all. The GED office might be at your local high school, community college, state Office of Adult Education, or state Department of Education, High School Equivalency or GED Division.

Questions to ask are:

Where is the nearest GED testing center?_____

Who is eligible (age)?_____

Is there a GED study preparation program?_____

Where?_____ Phone number?_____

Is the study program free?_____

Is the test free?_____

Where is it given?_____

Agency contact person, address and phone number?_____

_____

Most GED study programs are free. Some tests cost $3 per test, and some tests are free.

Who Honors the GED Certificate? Government and private employers and most colleges, universities, and vocational training centers honor it. Some colleges may require a higher than minimum passing score on the GED test for admission. Be sure to ask the people at the training program, college, or university you are interested in what minimum passing score they require, if any. When filling out job applications, you may be asked to circle the highest year of education you completed. If you have passed the GED test, you should always circle 12:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

A GED number is the number your state GED office gives your GED certificate, and you are sometimes asked to write it down on job or school applications.

What Is the Test Like? All questions have multiple-choice answers. The reading, science, and social studies tests mainly ask you to read a story and then to answer multiple-choice questions about that story. The writing skills test consists of multiple-choice questions on punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and pronunciation. The mathematics test deals with problems in number computation: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, percentages, decimals, algebra, and graph reading. Most GED study centers have practice tests and study books that show you practice questions. Ask for them. Bookstores and libraries also have GED practice books. At the end of this chapter is a list of some common ones.

How Is the Test Given and Scored? The tests are given one at a time. They are timed, and you are given about one and a half hours per test, depending upon the center giving the test. Most adults comfortably finish within the required time. To pass each individual test, you generally need a score of 35 or higher. However, to get your GED certificate, your total score for all five tests has to be 225, or an average of 45 per test. This means that if there are 80 questions in a test, about 36 (less than half) must be answered correctly.

Note: The score required to pass varies from state to state, so you should be sure to check on this. You may take the different parts of the test as often as you want.

CONTROL OF STRESS

Here you are, preparing for the five GED tests and really afraid--afraid of what the teachers might think, afraid of failure, afraid of not being able to do it. Most people who take the GED test (or any other test) feel fearful at some point. If you have any doubts about taking the real test, do some studying, either on your own by buying some books on the GED, or go to a GED preparation center.

It is particularly helpful to take practice tests, either on your own or through a center. If you get 50 percent (one half) of the questions on the

practice test correct, you are ready to take the real thing. You will have the advantage of already knowing what the test is like and how many correct answers you need to pass. If you don't get enough correct answers on the practice test to pass, you can study for a reasonable time and take another series of tests. You have nothing to lose and only experience to gain. Plenty of people pass the practice test right away and go on to pass the real test without having to do any real studying. Whether or not you are an "instant winner," you should realize that test taking can be learned. Research shows that the more used to test taking you are, the better you will do, both on the GED test and on other standardized tests. Some GED preparation classes do nothing but have people take practice tests over and over. And it works.

HINTS FOR TAKING THE GED TEST

1. Take a practice test (or two or three) before you take the real test.

2. Get a good night's sleep before taking the test.

3. Don't go into the test on an empty stomach.

4. Practice relaxing by taking a few deep breaths and imagining yourself in a happy, relaxed place, say, at a picnic. Do this for several weeks before the test. Try concentrating on those parts of test taking that have always put you into a panic; then, when you feel yourself getting anxious, make a special effort to relax by imagining your "happy scene" and breathing deeply. If you work on this, you will find you can do it during the real test as well.

5. When taking a test, quickly answer all the easy questions, and then go back to the hard questions and try to eliminate two or three choices. After you've eliminated several possibilities, guess.

6. If a particular question puts you into a panic, just guess the answer, put it out of your mind, and go on to another. If you have time, you can return to the original question for a third or fourth time.

7. When doing reading comprehension questions, remember to answer from the reading, not from your own opinion, even if you disagree violently with the reading.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Whether you decide to study on your own for the GED test or go to a GED preparation center, you're going to have to devote some time to the project. Studying every day for even a very short period of time is better than cramming at the last minute, or going into the test completely cold.

We all use our time differently, but here are some suggestions that might help you manage your time better while working on your GED test preparation:

1. For many people, it is actually a more efficient use of their time to go to a preparation center than to try to do everything on their own. Some of the advantages are:

   a. You're not likely to be interrupted by family or friends.

   b. You get support and encouragement from people at the center.

   c. Preparation centers often have many more GED-related books than you would be likely to find in a bookstore or library.

2. Design a study plan that looks right for you, using the form on the following page. Be realistic. Fifteen minutes a day, every day, of studying and taking practice tests and practicing relaxation will make a real difference. It's usually a good idea to study at the same time every day so you can get into the habit.

3. Get together with your family or a friend and discuss your study schedule and how they can help you stick to it.

4. Think of time spent studying for the GED test as time spent on yourself.

5. If you cannot study at home because of interruptions from children, friends, husband, phone calls, household duties, etc., find another place. It's a good idea to set up a desk or table for yourself which is yours alone. Public libraries are good, quiet places to study.

6. Talk to an educational counselor or teacher at the GED center for suggestions and support.

7. Find someone to share your anxieties and your joy of accomplishment. There may be times when this is really essential. Sometimes the persons closest to you may not be interested, or they may be too busy.

8. You can practice for your GED test even outside your regular study period just by taking the time to read the newspaper carefully every day. This improves your reading speed and your reading comprehension, and will help you do better on the test.

Discussion:

Break up into small groups of about six people each. Discuss these questions:

1. What are the barriers keeping women from going back to school to get GED certificates or to take college courses?

2. What can be done to solve these problems?

At the end of the discussion, one person from each group should report back to the whole class on what her group decided. People who have already received a GED certificate, or who are presently working for one, are encouraged to talk about their experiences, both in the small groups and with the class as a whole.

WHERE AND WHEN CAN I FIND TIME TO STUDY?

Don't fill this in hour by hour. Instead, block out the things you generally do and when you think you might find time to study. Don't pick times when you almost always feel like doing nothing--like right after dinner. Say where you would study, also.

Daily Schedule

Time	Activity	Location
A.M.		
7 - 8		
8 - 9		
9 - 10		
10 - 11		
11 - 12		
P.M.		
12 - 1		
1 - 2		
2 - 3		
3 - 4		
4 - 5		
5 - 6		
6 - 7		
7 - 8		
8 - 9		
9 - 10		

RESOURCES

Cambridge GED Program. New York: Cambridge Book Co., 1973.

This series is in six volumes: Interpretation of Reading Materials in the Natural Sciences, Correctness and Effectiveness of Expression, Interpretation of Materials in the Social Studies, Interpretation of Literary Materials, General Mathematical Ability, and Preparation for the High School Equivalency Examination (GED). Each volume costs about $3.95.

GED: How to Prepare for the High School Equivalency Examination. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1976.

The series has a number of volumes: The Social Studies Test, The Science Test, The Mathematics Test, The Writing Skills Test, and The Literature Test. Each costs about $3.95.

The GED Official Practice Test, Forms A and B, 1978.

Write to the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

GED Testing: Policies and Centers, 1978.

Write to the GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

Jenkins, Cliff; Silveira, Theodore; and Reynolds, David. How to Prepare for the New High School Equivalency Examination (G.E.D.). New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

This book contains outlines of the areas you are expected to know, as well as practice tests in all five GED subject areas. It costs about $5.95.

Chapter 2 - Colleges And Universities

OBJECTIVE: To get some basic information about community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Community colleges are two-year, public colleges that are especially designed to meet the needs of the communities around them. Usually, the majority of community college students commute to school. Community colleges also tend to have many more older students than private, four-year colleges have. Community colleges generally offer five kinds of service:

1. Remedial Education: Courses in adult basic education to help people fill gaps in reading, writing, or mathematical ability. Often these are geared toward the GED test, or there is a separate high school equivalency preparation course. English as a Second Language courses are often offered.

2. General Interest/Personal Development Courses: These are self-improvement courses. They might include creative writing, bread making, introduction to art, music, psychology, etc. A large number of people (well over 50 percent of the student body in some community colleges) take courses to satisfy a personal need or interest, to meet people with like concerns, or just for the fun of it.

3. Technical or Vocational Training: This can include anything, from secretarial studies and dental assisting to fisheries technology or agriculture. Often these programs lead to a certificate of some sort (for example, a medical records technician certificate or a paralegal certificate).

4. Degree Programs/Transfer Programs: After taking a series of courses in a particular area, say, business or liberal arts or French, students may be awarded an A.A. (Associate of Arts) degree in their major field. This is equivalent to the first two years of a four-year college. After completing the A.A., students can transfer into the middle of a four-year program at a college or university. When they complete that, they receive a B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) or B.S. (Bachelor of Science) degree.

5. Other Services: In addition to instructional services, most community colleges also offer counseling services, which may include career counseling, financial aid counseling, or personal counseling. Often these are open to anyone in the community. Community colleges also offer other community services such as noncredit public courses, film showings, or free meeting rooms for community groups.

Here is more information on community colleges:

Getting In: Community colleges are very easy to be accepted to; many don't even require a high school diploma or GED certificate, though you do generally have to be aged 18 or older. This means anyone can take courses, regardless of academic standing in high school or whether she or he finished high school. Check with your nearest community college to see if a GED or high school diploma is required.

Applying: Unlike four-year colleges and universities, community colleges usually don't have deadlines for applications, so it is very easy to apply. At many community colleges, you register for individual courses, and only later apply to degree-granting programs. (You can also apply directly to degree programs.) Call up your community college to find out how and when to register for a course or courses.

Finishing: There is no real pressure to finish a program of study in a particular period of time. Many people take one or two courses a semester or quarter; this makes it easy for people with daytime jobs or family responsibilities to take courses. Often courses are given at night.

Costs: Community college courses do not cost much, and usually you pay based on the number of courses you take. Financial aid is also available, both for younger and older students.

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Four-year colleges and universities tend to be less community-oriented than community colleges. The student body is often younger and is more likely to live at school. There may be less emphasis on vocational training and more emphasis on scholarship, though this doesn't always hold true.

Usually you have to apply in advance for degree programs, and you are less likely to be able just to take a few courses. Four-year colleges tend to be more expensive than community colleges and harder to get into, though this varies a lot. Four-year colleges and universities often require SAT or ACT scores* and high school grades from all applicants. Some colleges also require a written statement from you about why you want to attend college. The range of test scores, high school grade point average, etc., required for each school varies widely. Each applicant is considered individually at most colleges. Usually you must have a GED certificate, or

---

*SAT stands for Scholastic Aptitude Test. This is a three-hour exam given all over the country to people interested in attending college. ACT, the American College Test, is a similar exam, given mainly in the midwest. Talk to a high school or college guidance counselor to find out how and where to take these tests. There are also practice books you can buy that will help you prepare for them.

have finished high school in order to enter a four-year college or university. If you have a GED certificate, some schools require a minimum score on the GED test.

Four-year colleges and universities are all different. There are liberal arts colleges, Bible colleges, colleges that specialize in technical training, women's colleges, men's colleges, agricultural colleges, and many, many more. Colleges are either public (funded mostly through city, state, or federal funding and answering to the authority of the city or state government), or private (funded from various sources, but relatively self-directing). Some colleges are run by certain religious denominations, such as the Catholic church, and may even favor people of that denomination for admission. Usually, colleges offer programs leading only to the degree of B.A. (bachelor's degree) or M.A. (master's degree), while universities offer programs leading to the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy). Universities also tend to be made up of several colleges or schools.

COURSES AND PROGRAMS

A program is a series of courses spread out over one to four years or more, leading toward expertise and a degree in some field. Usually a program has three emphases:

"The basic knowledge that every educated woman or man should have"	1. General Requirements (also called general education requirements). This is an attempt to give you the general, all-around knowledge expected of an "educated person." These are usually specific courses, like English 101. Everyone, regardless of major field of interest, will have to take these courses.
"The expert"	2. Core Requirements, Degree Requirements, or Requirements in Your Field. These are the required courses that make you an expert in the area you have chosen. This could be music, education, construction technology, forestry, or a wide range of other subjects. The faculty (i.e., the teachers) in your chosen field will set these requirements.
"The well-rounded person with lots of different interests" (Also, the courses that keep you interested in school)	3. Electives. The courses you choose to take. Some electives may have to be in certain areas, such as math or humanities. Others are "free electives," which means you can take anything you want.

READING A COLLEGE CATALOGUE

College catalogues usually contain:

1. A description of the college, its library, buildings, faculty, and surroundings. Often pictures of the college are included.

2. Information about tuition, other fees, and financial aid.

3. Admissions requirements.

4. Information about whether the college is accredited.

5. Academic regulations (that is, minimum grade average you need to maintain to stay in school, and other rules).

6. Degree requirements for the different programs, undergraduate and graduate (that is, those courses that must be completed in order to earn a degree).

7. Listing and description of individual courses. Usually these are arranged by subject area and they are numbered. Beginning courses often have lower numbers than more advanced courses.

College catalogues can seem difficult to understand at first, but you will learn to wade through them. The hardest part is often the degree requirements section. If you are in a degree program, be sure to check the requirements often. Sometimes they change between the time you enter and the time you graduate. It's very important that you fulfill the proper requirements, because you won't graduate unless you do.

Task:

Take the catalogue from the community college nearest you or from another college you're interested in. Pick a degree program you think you would like. Pretend you are a first-year student, and pick four or five courses to take your first semester. Write your courses on a blank piece of paper.

Three areas must be represented:

1. General education

2. Your special field (sometimes called your "major")

3. Electives

Since it's your first semester, you will want to start with the lower-level courses (the ones listed first in each department) and ones with no prerequisites. (If you see a note in a course description that says, for example, "Prerequisite: History 100," it means that you must take History 100 before taking that course.) Don't pick two courses that meet at the same time.

STEP 1: *Decide on a program or major.*

STEP 2: *Check the general education requirements and read the course descriptions (avoiding courses with prerequisites). Pick one that looks interesting.*

STEP 3: *Check the degree requirements and read the course descriptions (again avoiding courses with prerequisites). Pick the beginning or introductory courses in your field.*

STEP 4: *Look for an elective by reading more course descriptions.*

HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

Most people pay for college through some combination of:

1. Scholarships or grants
2. Special educational loans (usually low-interest)
3. Savings
4. Help from their families
5. Money made at summer or part-time jobs
6. Going to school part-time while working.

Exercise: Researching Financial Aid

One of the best ways to find out about financial aid is to talk to a financial aid officer. Go to the college near you and ask to speak to the person in charge of financial aid. You don't have to be attending that college to ask for advice. It is a good idea to have some idea of what you want when you go. Are you planning to go to school full-time or part-time? Do you have a particular college in mind? What money do you already have?

Right now we will do some research of our own.

STEP 1: *Find the financial aid section of any college catalogue. If it's your own catalogue, check off the types of financial aid you might try for. Underline the requirements for each type.*

STEP 2: *Decide whether you want to go full-time or part-time. Write down in the Expenses part below the amount of money you would need to go to college for a year. Do this by reading the catalogue section on tuition and fees.*

STEP 3: *On the next page, list the sources of financial aid you are eligible for or that you think you might use.*

Expenses

Name of college or university _____

Total tuition and fees

Full-time (usually 4 or more courses per semester and 8 or more per year; 12 or more per year if the school is divided into quarters) _____

Part-time (usually less than 4 courses per semester or quarter, but check the definition of part-time for your college) _____

Estimated living expenses for a year

Housing _____

Food _____

Personal expenses _____

Books and supplies _____

(Use the student expenses section of the catalogue as a basis for your estimate, but remember that catalogue estimates don't take into account people who are supporting children.)

TOTAL _____

Scholarships I could apply for:

Loans I could apply for:

Do I have any savings that could go into this?

Would my family help?

Could I go part-time and work, or work full-time in the summer and part-time during the school year?

The main thing to remember about getting money for education is to be assertive and keep trying. Many scholarships and loans require long application forms and a lot of information about you and your personal finances. Often colleges have their own forms as well, or they require an interview. Some people are turned down the first time because they didn't fill in the form properly or because there wasn't enough scholarship or loan money available.

It is to your advantage to try to be as convincing as possible to the people who give out the money. You will impress people if you are clear about your goals and if you are well-informed about the kinds of money available. Make a special appointment to talk to a financial aid officer and get help with the forms if there is anything you don't understand about them.

WHERE THE MONEY IS

Here is a list of just a few of the kinds of money available. For a fuller account, talk to a financial aid officer and/or send for some of the financial aid books or pamphlets mentioned in Resources.

1. Grants and Scholarships

   Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG): These federal Department of Education grants are available to undergraduates attending half-time or more, and range from $50 to $1,600 per year. Apply directly to the BEOG program office, using forms you get from your local community college, high school, and in some cases, public library. This is an outright grant and doesn't have to be repaid. It does, however, have to be matched with aid from another source.

   Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG): These are designed for undergraduates attending school half-time or more who are in acute need of financing. Usually you apply directly to the financial aid office of the college or university you are attending or wish to attend. This money also is intended to supplement other types of financial aid.

   Social Security Benefits: These are available for the full-time student between 18 and 22 years of age who is a dependent of a deceased, disabled, or retired parent covered by Social Security. Contact the Social Security office in your area.

   Veterans Benefits: Both grants and loans are available to some veterans. Contact Chief, Veterans Program Branch, Division of Student Services and Veterans Programs, Regional Office Building, No. 3, Room 3514, 7th and D Street, SW, Washington, DC 20202, or go to the Veterans Affairs office in a nearby college.

   Higher Education Scholarship Grant Program: Funds for full-time or part-time students who are Native Americans, Eskimos, or Aleuts to continue education after high school. Contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Box 1788, Albuquerque, NM 87103, or your nearest B.I.A. office.

National Hispanic Scholarship Fund: Scholarships mainly for undergraduate study for students of Hispanic background living in the U.S. Contact NHSF, Box 571, San Francisco, CA 94101.

National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students (NSSFNS): Primarily for undergraduates. Contact NSSFNS, 1776 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

Second Career Scholarships for Displaced Homemakers: Funding for counseling to assess needs and for job retraining. Write to Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 2012 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

2. Loans

National Direct Student Loans (NDSL): Loans totaling up to $2,500 in the first two years, up to $5,000 total, for undergraduates. Interest rate is 3 percent per year and you have ten years to repay. Loan repayment begins after you have finished school. Talk to a financial aid officer.

Federally Guaranteed Student Loans (FGSL): These used to be called Federally Insured Student Loans. They can't exceed $7,500 for undergraduates, and the rate of interest is 7 percent, though you don't have to start repaying the loan until after you graduate. These loans are actually made by banks, savings and loan associations, and credit unions, but your school has to certify that you are in need. Talk to a financial aid officer about this.

3. Employment

College Work-Study: Under this program, students work part-time during the school term, and up to 40 hours per week during vacations. Most of the work opportunities are on campus and sometimes they can be related to the student's educational or vocational interests. The federal government pays a percentage of the student's wage, while the employer pays the rest.

Regular Part-Time Work: Most students these days do some kind of part-time work during the school year, perhaps 15 to 25 hours a week, to help pay expenses. Check whether your college has a student employment office.

Full-Time Work: Many students, particularly older students, work full-time and go to school part-time, often in the evenings. This can be extremely tiring, though, particularly if you are also a mother. Before you go this route, or the even more difficult one of trying to work full-time and going to school full-time, ask yourself whether it's really necessary. Have you checked into financial aid as carefully as you should? At every school there are people exhausting themselves who don't need to because they are eligible for scholarships or loans.

4. Other Ways to Save Money

   Food Stamps and Other Types of Public Assistance: In some states, you may be eligible for food stamps and other kinds of aid even though you are a student. Check into this, particularly if you have children.

   Day Care: Some colleges and universities have cheap or free child-care or babysitting centers where you may leave your children while you are in class. Look into this, because it may save you a lot of money and inconvenience. If your college doesn't have any child-care services, complain. If enough mothers do that, they may set some up. (Note: Most day-care services take only children over two, or only school-age children. Ask about this at your college.)

STUDY SKILLS

1. If you are going to school after some years away, look into getting college credit for some of the things you've done, including volunteer and homemaking work and other life experiences. It may also be possible for you to get further credit by taking College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams. These exist in more than 40 subject areas, and many colleges accept their results. See the Resources section at the end of this chapter for the address to write to for CLEP and for information on credit for homemaking and volunteer work.

2. Going to college involves a great deal of reading. As part of your preparation for college, you should be reading every day. Get into the habit of going over the newspaper carefully each day. Practice reading both for speed and for better understanding. Poor reading skills are a big reason why many people have to leave college, but reading is also an area in which you can improve with a little work.

3. Take any workshops in study skills that are offered by your college. They are very useful and usually they are free. They cover things like more effective reading, how to take good notes, writing papers, and mathematics skills. It's especially crucial that your reading skills be adequate. If you're not sure of your skills, take a remedial reading course.

4. Take a special tour of the library and get to know some of the librarians. Practice using the subject index, and get extra help, if necessary, in understanding the cataloguing (numbering) system by which the books are arranged. This will be useful when you write papers or do class reading.

5. Buy a book on proper procedures for writing papers. We recommend The Elements of Style, by William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White (New York: MacMillan, 1963); and A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, by Kate Turabian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

6. Take advantage of counseling services if you're feeling overwhelmed. Often they can help you to be more positive and confident about school and the rest of your life.

7. Get yourself a tutor if you're not doing well in a particular subject. Often there are free ones available.

8. Plan your time well and study with other people when you can. Studying with other people is especially helpful right before exams. You can ask each other practice questions and discuss readings.

9. Ask for help, especially in writing papers. Can you pass in a first draft and have the instructor make suggestions?

10. Work on your typing. College papers are usually typed, double-spaced.

11. Take a basic writing course (in some colleges, these are required).

12. Have a separate notebook or separate notebook section for each course. Date all lecture notes and include the day of the week.

13. If you miss a lecture, borrow someone's notes. Try to get to know the people in all your classes, so you will always have someone to call about assignments and to borrow notes from. As a college student, you are expected to keep up on assignments, test dates, and so on, whether or not you were in class the day they were announced. College is very different from high school in the amount of responsibility you are required to take.

RESOURCES

Get hold of the catalogue of the college you're interested in. Most libraries have a collection of college catalogues. If they don't have the one you want, send away for it yourself (see below for books that contain the addresses of colleges). Usually colleges send out their catalogues free of charge.

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges. Woodbury, N.Y.: Barron's Educational Series, 1978.

Describes thousands of colleges all over the country, including the kinds of students they're looking for, the courses of study they offer, the cost of attending, and the address to write to for further information. Can be found in any library.

CLEP. For information on the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, write to CLEP, College Entrance Examination Board, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

Elkstrom, Ruth B., et al. How to Get College Credit for What You Have Learned as a Homemaker and Volunteer. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, Accrediting Women's Competencies Project, Publication T185, 1978.

Write to ETS, Princeton, NJ 08541, send $3.00, and ask for the publication by name.

Financial Aid: A Partial List of Resources for Women. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges, Project on the Status and Education of Women.

This is an excellent list of financial aid resources available to women. It contains sections on aid for returning women students (including displaced homemakers), Black, Native American and Hispanic women, and handicapped women. Write for a free copy to Association of American Colleges, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Lenz, Elinor, and Shaevitz, Marjorie Hansen. So You Want to Go Back to School: Facing the Realities of Re-entry. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977.

An excellent book, written especially for people going back to school after time away working or running a household. Includes all aspects of choosing a school, applying to school, and what to expect once you're there. Also has a useful section on getting credit for life experiences.

Lovejoy, Clarence E. Lovejoy's College Guide. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979.

Contains information similar to Barron's Profiles and can be found in any library.

Mitchell, Joyce Slayton. I Can Be Anything: Careers and Colleges for Young Women. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1975.

This book contains descriptions of many types of careers and the education required for each. Despite the title, it's useful for women of any age. Order from College Board Publication Orders, Box 2815, Princeton, NJ 08540; $4.50.

Selected List of Postsecondary Opportunities for Minorities and Women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Bureau of Postsecondary Education.

Comprehensive list of private, state, and federal programs. Write to U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202.

Chapter 3 - Job Training

OBJECTIVE: To learn about job training opportunities in government and elsewhere.

There are many other types of training available besides what you get in colleges or universities. In this chapter you will learn about job training through CETA, nonprofit organizations, and private technical schools. You will also learn about opportunities in private industry and in the armed forces. One important source of training is apprenticeship programs, which will be discussed in Unit III, the chapter on Nontraditional Jobs. If you are interested in blue-collar jobs or working with your hands, be sure to read that chapter.

CETA (COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACT)

CETA* is the main federal program providing training and jobs to people who are unemployed, underemployed, or economically disadvantaged. It serves millions of Americans, both women and men, all over the country. CETA pays for free classroom and on-the-job training, as well as for a variety of counseling, career assessment, and placement services. It also pays for full-time work, which can last for as long as a year. This work tends to be in the public sector (working for fire departments, in local city government offices, or related public service work), or in private, nonprofit organizations, for example, day-care centers or community organizations. As a CETA worker, you become a regular employee of one of these organizations, except that CETA pays your salary instead of the agency or organization you're working for. Your job is supposed to give you work experience and on-the-job training which will later help you to get another job <u>not</u> subsidized by CETA.

When you go looking for CETA training, keep in mind that it can come in many forms. In most areas, there are a number of different programs which are either receiving CETA funds directly from the government to do counseling or training, or which have employees who are being paid through CETA funds. In New York City, for example, there are more than 600 different organizations receiving CETA funds, and more than 247,000 individuals receiving classroom or on-the-job training or counseling and other services. Here are some examples of the kinds of organizations that might make up the total CETA program for a state or county; not all will exist in every area.

- A small private organization set up to train women for nontraditional jobs such as plumbing or welding. The group receives funds directly from CETA to counsel, train, and place CETA-eligible women in jobs or apprenticeship programs.

---

*CETA is usually pronounced "See-ta."

- A training center designed to train large numbers of CETA-eligible persons in skills that are useful in a particular area, for example, clerical skills, electrical repair, and nurse's aide skills. Often these are called Opportunities Industrialization Centers.

- A shelter for battered women which has two positions open in child care for two CETA-eligible persons. The salaries will be paid by CETA and not by the shelter.

- A TAP (Training, Assessment and Placement) service set up to determine who is CETA-eligible and to help people with vocational counseling and placement in on-the-job training, as well as in unsubsidized (non-CETA) jobs.

- A local sanitation department in which about a quarter of the employees are paid by CETA and recruited through the pool of CETA-eligible persons in the area.

- A center set up to train displaced homemakers. To qualify for services, you must fit the CETA Title III definition of a displaced homemaker (women who are divorced, separated, or widowed and who are trying to get back into the job market after many years of being homemakers and mothers).

- A program set up to give job experience to unemployed youth.

Am I Eligible for CETA?

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (amended 1978) is the federal law that set up the nationwide CETA program. It is divided into a number of different "titles," each of which has a slightly different aim or target population, and each of which has different eligibility requirements. The most important titles can be summarized as follows:

TITLE II-B: Services for the Economically Disadvantaged

To be eligible under Title II-B, you must have been unemployed for seven or more days, or be underemployed or in school. Your total family income must be at, or below, the poverty level, or at 70 percent of the lower living standard level, whichever is higher. To find out what these levels mean in dollars and cents, check with the CETA office in your area. Both of these levels depend in part on the cost of living and in part on the number of people in your family. Title II-B offers classroom training (sometimes including high school equivalency test preparation as well as skills training), on-the-job training, and other services.

TITLE II-D: Transitional Employment for the Economically Disadvantaged

To be eligible under Title II-D, you must be economically disadvantaged and have been unemployed for at least 15 weeks, or be receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This title provides temporary employment and training in public service employment, such as fire fighting, transportation, etc.

TITLE III: Special Federal Responsibilities

This entitlement provides for special counseling and training programs for people such as Native Americans, migrant farm workers, women, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, and others who are considered to have a particular disadvantage in the labor market. Eligibility requirements vary, so you should check the individual programs.

TITLE IV: Youth Programs

This entitlement contains a number of different programs for youth, including Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Projects (YCCIP), Youth Employment and Training Programs (YETP), and the Job Corps. Eligibility requirements vary. For some programs, you must come from a family whose total income does not exceed 85 percent of the lower living standard. For others, you just have to be unemployed. The age requirement is 16 to 19 years of age in some programs, 16 to 21 in others.

TITLE VI: Countercyclical Public Service Employment

This provides temporary employment in public service jobs when the national rate of unemployment goes over 4 percent. The majority of CETA recipients are under this title at the present time. The eligibility requirements are that you must have been unemployed for 10 of the 12 weeks preceding application and be unemployed at the time of application. Your income must be at, or below, the lower living standard, or you must be receiving AFDC or SSI. It is fairly easy to meet Title VI eligibility requirements if you have been unemployed.

How to Go about Getting into a CETA Job or Training Program

Visit the main CETA office in your area to find out what you are eligible for. It's a good idea to ask the counselor what kinds of CETA programs are available in your area. Maybe there are some special small programs particularly designed for people in your situation. CETA is geared toward slotting you into a job as quickly as possible, so you might simply be placed in the same kind of job you've had before. If you want to get into something new, you have to be pretty assertive about it.

When you've been declared eligible for CETA jobs, you will still have to go to job interviews. A job isn't just given to you automatically. Agencies which have openings want to see who is going to be working for them, even if the salary is being paid by CETA. Try to get as much out of your CETA experience as you can, whether it's counseling, classroom training, on-the-job and classroom combined, or a full-time job that you'll have for the next 12 months (most CETA jobs don't last any longer than that). If you are in an on-the-job program, treat it like a real job, because that's what it is. The long-range aim of all CETA programs is to get you into an unsubsidized job, that is, one that CETA isn't paying for. When you leave your temporary CETA job, you will want to bring with you a good recommendation from your supervisor so that you can get another, and perhaps better, job.

Exercise:

Through telephone calls to government officials, visits to the local CETA office, or the personal experiences of people in the class, try to piece together a picture of the CETA services that exist in your city or county.

1. How many programs are there in your area that are connected with CETA? What are their names? What services do they offer to unemployed people?

2. What (if any) classroom training is available in your area, and what skills are taught?

3. What kinds of CETA jobs are available and where?

Make a diagram of CETA services on a big piece of paper and hang it on the wall. (This exercise may take a few days to complete.)

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Especially if you live in a city (but also in some rural areas), there may be other free or low-cost training programs you can take advantage of. Among these are programs operating on sliding fees, private donations, state or federal grants, volunteer power, or a combination of all of these. Take some time to research what is available in your area. Talk to a good vocational counselor (shop around until you find one who seems to know something about training opportunities). Employment counselors at community colleges or small nonprofit agencies (especially those oriented toward women) are usually the best, because they give you more individual attention. Counselors at state employment agencies and CETA offices are sometimes excellent and sometimes not very good.

It helps to ask around among people you know to get a recommendation for a counselor who is good, whether in a state employment office or a small program. When you make your first contact with an agency, try to see the person you've been told is good, rather than just waiting to be assigned a counselor. When looking for training programs, check with minority organizations, women's organizations, bulletin boards, YMCAs, YWCAs, community organizations, the newspaper, and the public library. Talk to your friends and to several counselors, and make a telephone call to your state department of social services to find out what programs they know about. It's worth it to spend some time searching for a training program in your area of interest.

Don't just grab at the first thing that comes along. Here are some examples of different kinds of small training programs. These may or may not exist in your area:

- A right-to-read program which teaches remedial reading, math, and English as a Second Language to adults. This is usually free, operating from a high school.

- A high school equivalency preparation course run by a local church.

- A program at a local women's center which teaches job-seeking skills (interviewing, filling out job applications, resume writing, etc.) to single mothers. Day care is provided.

- An auto mechanics course offered to adults through the local YWCA.

- A program offered by a community-based drug rehabilitation center to teach electrical repair to ex-addicts.

PRIVATE TRADE AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Trade schools used to be considered second-class by many people, but that's no longer true. These days, a person with a certificate or diploma from a good technical program may have an easier time finding a job--and make better pay--than a person with a B.A. from college. The main difference among technical, trade, and vocational schools and colleges is that in technical schools, you concentrate almost solely on the skills that you will use on the job. By contrast, at a college you take a number of subjects, such as physical education or speech, that don't necessarily relate directly to your interest in being, say, a carpenter or dental hygienist. At a college there is an attempt to give you a more well-rounded education. (Many colleges, especially community colleges, now have technical programs, too, so there are getting to be fewer differences between the two.)

In a private technical school you can learn electronics, aviation, hotel management, cosmetology, auto mechanics, medical and dental technology, welding, commercial art, secretarial skills, and hundreds of other things. The length of programs varies from a few months to several years, depending on the trade and the skills involved.

If you decide to go to a trade school, it is important that you find a good one. Unfortunately, there is relatively little government supervision of private trade schools in some areas. Dishonestly run, "fly-by-night" schools are more common than you might think. There are even examples of students who have paid money to take training courses and found out--too late--that the school the recruiter talked about in such glowing terms didn't even exist! Other schools have poorly trained or unqualified teachers, out-of-date teaching equipment, or nonexistent job placement services.

Be suspicious:

- If a school claims that 100 percent of its graduates get jobs, but won't give the names of anyone who has graduated.

- If a school tries to rush you into signing a contract because "there are only one or two places left," when you haven't even seen the place.

- If the school claims that you will get a "great" job after only a few weeks' training (it takes longer than that in most cases).

- If a school is not accredited by some national association (such as the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools), or approved for people receiving veterans benefits or other financial aid.

- If very few of the people who start out at a particular school ever finish.

- If a recruiter seems reluctant to answer questions about teachers, teaching equipment, or facilities.

- If students at a school are not eligible for Federally Guaranteed Student Loans, or if the school has no financial aid officer.

Your best bet is to insist (if at all possible) on actually visiting the school, looking over the classrooms, and talking to other students, or better yet, graduates. It's also a good idea to ask a company that specializes in the trade that interests you whether they recognize the skills program at a particular trade school. Have they ever hired anyone from that school? Are they likely to do so in the future?

For further information on accreditation and trade schools in general, see the Resources section at the end of this chapter. To find a school in the trade that interests you, see Evelyn R. Kay's Programs and Schools..., listed among the references. Many trade associations and unions will send out listings of schools they consider adequate. To find the names of trade associations, look in a book on career education or in the Occupational Outlook Handbook (see Resources). Pick your school with care and you will be more likely to receive quality training and get a decent job when you finish.

Discussion:

What training programs (either for profit or nonprofit) have people in the class had experience with? How would they rate that experience, good or bad?

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Home study or correspondence school courses are offered by a number of different colleges and schools in hundreds of subjects. Again, be careful. Don't be cheated by some dishonest operation. Correspondence school courses are available from under $50 to up to several hundred dollars a course. Get as much information about the correspondence school as you can before sending money. Also, ask yourself if you're really motivated enough to take a course without having someone stand over you all the time. Some correspondence courses are quite hard, and only certain people can learn in this way. To find out whether the home study course that interests you is accredited and reputable, or to find out what is available, write to National Home Study Council (addresses in the Resources section).

Beware of "diploma mills" that promise you a college degree by mail without making you do much or any work. If the college is not in the official government directories of colleges and universities (available in most libraries), it may be fraudulent, and any "diploma" or "degree" you get from it is just a worthless piece of paper.

TRAINING PROGRAMS IN PRIVATE INDUSTRY

Thousands of private businesses and companies now offer training programs in everything from welding and small engine repair to management, computer programming, and labor relations. Some large companies offer apprenticeship programs that operate much like those developed by unions, from which you may receive a journeyman's certificate. The main problem with private industry training programs is that they are hard to find. There is no single reference book or directory that lists all programs that are available.

Industry training programs are geared toward jobs in a particular company. The skills may or may not be transferable to some other company. Here are some examples of training programs:

- McDonald's, Inc., runs a management training school whose graduates go on to manage McDonald's hamburger stands.
- IBM runs an on-the-job training program in IBM typewriter repair.
- Ford Motor Company trains its new assembly line workers in welding and other operations where required.
- American Telephone and Telegraph has regular training courses which are supposed to help its employees move up the career ladder.
- Hospitals often give nurse's aide, ward clerk, or medical records technician training.
- Some companies are running word processing training programs for new and old clerical personnel.
- Many insurance companies offer free classroom and on-the-job training for their agents.
- Some banks offer teller or bank management training programs.
- Some companies pay for their employees to take evening classes in areas related (and sometimes unrelated) to their jobs.

It's good practice when applying for jobs, especially in large companies, to find out during an interview whether special training programs are available. State employment agencies often will have information on industry training programs in that state. If there is a particular area of work that you're interested in, it may be worthwhile to write directly to a company that offers that kind of work to find out if they train. Company training programs are especially valuable because they usually pay you while you learn. Avoid totally the ones that ask you to pay. Not only will you lose money, but there may not be a job at the end.

TRAINING PROGRAMS IN THE ARMED SERVICES

The armed services of the United States probably run the largest and most diverse series of job training programs you could find anywhere. Much of

the training is transferable to civilian life and civilian jobs. These days, only a small proportion of people in the Army or other branches of the service are trained for combat duty. Most service people are in communications, health-related fields, transportation, engineering, electronics, administration, and dozens of other noncombat areas.

Here is a sample of only some of the training programs that are available in just one branch of the armed services, in this case, the Air Force. All training is free, and you also get free room and board and draw pay while you are being trained. In the case of the Air Force, you also get college credit for any training programs you take. You can get college credit for some training programs in other branches of the armed services, too.

AIRCRAFT AND MISSILE MAINTENANCE

- Aerospace Ground Equipment Technology
- Aircraft Maintenance Technology
- Flight Engineering
- Maintenance Production Management

ELECTRONICS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- Air Traffic Control
- Electronic Computer Systems Technology
- Photographic Systems Technology
- Radio Communications Technology

HEALTH CARE SCIENCES

- Animal Technology
- Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Technology
- Dental Assisting
- Food and Nutritional Science
- Medical Laboratory Technology
- Nursing
- Pharmacy Technology

MANAGEMENT AND LOGISTICS

- Data Processing
- Procurement
- Restaurant Management
- Transportation and Traffic Management

PUBLIC AND SUPPORT SERVICES

- Automotive Maintenance
- Construction Trades
- Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration
- Music
- Police Science
- Recreation Management
- Weather Forecasting
- Audiovisual Production
- Interpreting and Translating
- Printing Technology

What Are Some Advantages of Going into the Military?

1. All branches of the armed services have benefits, some of which continue throughout one's life. Depending on the branch of the service, these may include:

   a. Free medical care for you and your dependents while you are on active duty.

   b. Seventy-five percent tuition assistance for any further training you decide to pursue after you leave military service.

   c. Pension benefits.

   d. An early retirement system if you decide to make the military your career.

2. Veterans (people who have been in military service in the past) also receive preference in civil service (federal government) jobs, as well as in many apprenticeship programs.

3. People in the military are given free training as well as some choice about which field they would like to specialize in. Upon entering one of the armed services, they are given a battery of tests to determine which fields they are best suited for.

4. Your room and board are provided free while you're on active duty.

5. Being in the armed services is not necessarily a permanent commitment. Most people enlist for a few years only. When they come back to civilian life, they often use the training they've received to get a good job, or the 75 percent free tuition benefit to pursue further education.

What Are Some Disadvantages of Military Service?

1. First, there is discrimination against women in entry requirements for many branches of the armed services. There is also discrimination against single people with dependents.

2. Women are still in a minority in all branches of the armed services, and those who are there tend to be concentrated in clerical jobs or in the health fields, notably, nursing. There is more of an effort now to train women in nontraditional jobs, but the woman engineer or electrician in the Army or Navy is still likely to find herself working mostly with men.

3. When you're in the armed services, particularly during basic training, you can expect to give up a lot of the democratic freedoms we tend to take for granted, like free speech, freedom to wear what you want, freedom to live wherever you want, etc. Before entering any branch of the military, it's a good idea to talk seriously to someone else who has been in the service other than the recruiter. The military is a very conservative, hierarchical organization.

4. Women are still not allowed in some areas of active duty, notably those that would involve them in direct combat (you may consider this either an advantage or a disadvantage). Those areas not open to women are becoming fewer and fewer these days, though, so it's important to check on this. The Resources section lists a packet of materials on women and military service which can answer many of your questions in this and other areas.

5. In many areas of the military, women must have substantially higher scores than men on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery in order to qualify. This same test is given for all branches of the service except the Coast Guard, but it is scored differently in each branch.

6. If you have moral scruples about killing, even if someone else is doing it, or if you have doubts about the usefulness of wars in general, you should think twice about entering the military. Remember that the military could order you into a combat zone in case of war. You cannot just quit if you don't like it, as you can other jobs. You must stay for a specific length of time.

What Are the Requirements for the Different Branches of the Military?

If you are interested in military service, you should be sure to talk to one or more recruiters. There are separate recruiters for each branch of the armed services in most communities, so talk to as many as you can, and compare the eligibility requirements, training opportunities, and benefits in each branch. You can find the phone numbers of recruiters by looking in the phone book under the appropriate department: U.S. Army, Navy, etc. If possible, try to talk to some women in the service to find out how they feel about it. Read recruitment information carefully and critically. Ask the recruiters pointed questions, and don't rush into anything. You will be required to answer a great many personal questions, to take a physical exam, and to pass a general aptitude test (the passing score varies, depending on the branch of the service, whether you're male or female, and in some cases on whether or not you have a high school diploma). Be sure to check the eligibility requirements carefully, as they change often.

Note: When the military talks about dependents, it means spouses as well as children, aged parents, etc. Thus, two dependents often means one wife (or husband) and one child.

Discussion:

1. Knowing what you now know about training opportunities and other benefits in the armed services, do you feel more women should go into the military?

2. Do you know any women in the military? How do they feel about it?

3. Why do you think so many branches of the military have different entrance requirements for men and women? Should this be changed? Why is the situation so bleak for divorced, separated, or never-married people with children?

RESOURCES

Bear, John. College Degrees by Mail: A Comprehensive Guide to Nontraditional Degree Programs.

Contains a list of good schools, as well as a list of suspicious-sounding ones. Available from the author at 356 North Main Street, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.

Gross, Ronald. New Paths to Learning: College Education for Adults.

This booklet has useful information on all sorts of different learning opportunities, from external degree programs to TV courses. Send $0.50 for Pamphlet No. 546 to Public Affairs Pamphlets, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Kay, Evelyn R. Programs and Schools: A Supplement to the Directory of Postsecondary Schools with Occupational Programs. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1978.

This excellent reference book is found in many libraries and lists training program titles, such as Air Conditioning, Maintenance, Nursing, Real Estate Management, etc. It also lists the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all the postsecondary (beyond high school) schools that have training programs in individual occupational areas. Includes more than 175 different program areas and thousands of schools.

Lederer, Muriel. The Guide to Career Education. New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1975.

This excellent book lists addresses to write to for information on hundreds of careers whose training programs start right after high school. Also describes different careers and discusses various types of training opportunities.

National Association of Trade and Technical Schools. Directory of Accredited Private Trade and Technical Schools.

Available free from the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, Director of Distribution, Room 440, 2021 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

National Home Study Council has a list of accredited correspondence schools. Write to National Home Study Council, 1601 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

National University Extension Association has a catalogue of college and university correspondence courses. Write to the National University Extension Association, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

Occupational Outlook Handbook. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1978-79 edition.

This book is found in just about any library, and among other things contains the addresses of hundreds of trade and professional associations.

Women's Equity Action League (WEAL). "Women and the Military."

Informational packet which includes materials on employment opportunities, discrimination against women in the military, minority women, and women and the draft. Write to WEAL Education and Legal Defense Fund, 805 15th Street, NW, Suite 822, Washington, DC 20005; cost is $3.50.

Chapter 4 - Community Resources

OBJECTIVE: To discover how to learn from, and how to take better advantage of community resources, including nonprofit agencies, libraries, and other community organizations.

HOW TO BECOME A COMMUNITY RESOURCE YOURSELF

Do you really know what's available in your own village, town, city, county, or state? Do you know where to go for:

Free recreation?
Help in paying for child care?
Emergency welfare funds?
Emergency shelter?
Remedial reading or math for adults?
Free or low-cost legal help?
Family counseling?
Help if you or someone in your family has a drinking problem?
Personal counseling?

Do you know whom to complain to if:

A store won't take back faulty merchandise?
Your landlord won't get the boiler fixed and you've had no heat for three days?
You feel you've been discriminated against?

Do you know what the eligibility requirements are for:

Welfare?
Food stamps?
Low-income housing?
Legal aid services?
A public library card?
A business license?

Anyone can become an expert on her or his community just by doing a little collecting of information. Here are some ideas:

1. Start picking up brochures or flyers you see lying around which describe community services or agencies. Places to look are:

   The public library (especially the lobby)
   Welfare offices
   Legal aid offices
   Women's centers
   YWCAs and YMCAs

State or federal office buildings (especially offices having to do with education or social services)
Bulletin boards (don't tear flyers from bulletin boards; copy the information)
Minority organizations
Neighborhood associations
Churches or synagogues

2. Look around to see if anyone has put out a directory of social services in the area. Organizations like the League of Women Voters or the Junior League often do things like this. Their booklets may be called something like "Where to Call for Help." You can add these to your collection of brochures. Very often your congressional representatives will send out a directory of community services if you telephone their offices. The local headquarters of major political parties will sometimes have the same information.

3. If you want, you can file your brochures and any other information you collect under subjects. Here are two lists of subject headings set up by two different women. Each piece of information (brochure, newspaper clipping, written note, etc.) is put into a manila folder with a subject heading. Each of these two people has topics of particular interest, as you can see from the two lists:

I	II
Employment agencies	Hispanic organizations
Welfare	Neighborhood associations
WIN program	Day care
CETA programs	Women's organizations
Legal aid services	Elected officials (city, county, state, federal)
Day care	Adult education programs
Recreation	Emergency numbers
Family counseling programs	

Exercise:

1. Each person in the class should be given a copy of the interview form on page 80, which may be photocopied or retyped on a ditto sheet. Then each person should visit an agency or organization in the community that offers a service or does political work. Interview one of the people who works for the organization, using the questions suggested on the form. Also pick up any available brochures, flyers, or other information about the organization.
Hint: Say that you're part of a class and that the whole class is compiling information on social service agencies and political organizations in your community.

Examples of places to go:

Public library
Welfare office
CETA office or one of the CETA programs

Alcoholism programs
Family counseling groups
Women's centers
Day care centers
Police station
Courthouse
Offices of town, county, or state officials
Black, Hispanic, Native American, or Asian American organizations

It's a good idea to have two people run through a practice interview in front of the class before everyone goes out; for example, someone could interview the workshop coordinator.

2. After the interviews, each person should come back and report to the class on what she has found. This is best done all together. If possible, report on your feelings about the interview. Were you nervous? Was the person you interviewed nervous? Would you recommend this agency to someone in need of help? Use the second sheet of the form (page 81) to help you evaluate your visit.

3. When everyone has finished, attach any brochures or flyers to the interview sheets. Put the sheets into a binder, either in alphabetic order by organization, or divided into subjects like:

   Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
   Courts and Criminal Justice Services
   Employment and Training Services
   Family Planning
   Financial Assistance
   Health Services
   Housing Services
   Legal Services
   Mental Health Services (including Counseling)
   Recreation
   Services for the Aged
   Services for Children
   Services for the Handicapped
   Services for Mentally Retarded People
   Services for Non-English Speakers
   Services for Women
   Social Change Organizations

INTERVIEW DESCRIPTION FORM

_____
Name of Agency or Organization

Is this a person-to-person interview?_____Telephone interview?_____

Location of agency_____

Mailing address_____

Phone number(s)_____

Person(s) interviewed_____

His/her position(s)_____

Short description of service or purpose of agency or group_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What hours is office open?_____

Who is eligible for these services?_____

_____

About how many people are served each year?_____

How much does it cost for these services?_____

Are there fee waivers or sliding fee scales for low-income people?_____

How would a person who needed help make contact with the service?

By telephone_____Walk in_____Make appointment_____

Be referred by another agency_____Other_____

How many people are on the staff and in what positions?_____

_____

Any bilingual staff?_____If yes, what languages?_____

What other similar services are in this community?_____

Are speakers ever sent to community groups to explain this program?_____

Who is the person to call about this?_____

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE AGENCY

	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
1. I felt welcomed by the first person to whom I talked.			
2. I felt welcomed by the person I interviewed.			
3. The information they gave me was clear and easy to understand.			
4. They had free brochures or leaflets about the program.			
5. They seemed interested in my questions.			
6. They asked me questions.			
7. The building or office was fairly clean and well-kept. The atmosphere was good.			
8. People I saw using the service seemed satisfied.			
9. The staff seemed to be organized and doing their jobs well.			
10. I would recommend this agency to a friend.			
11. I would use this agency myself.			

OTHER COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Date of interview Name of Investigator

LIBRARIES AND HOW TO USE THEM

Libraries are an excellent community resource because you can find almost any kind of information in them just by looking in the right place. There are two main kinds of libraries, public libraries and school libraries. The first is supposed to be for the use of everyone in the community. The second is located in an elementary school, high school, or college, and it is for the use of the students at that school. If there is no public library nearby, one of the school libraries may be able to be used both by the school and by interested people who are not students. If your community doesn't have a public library, be sure to get in touch with the nearest school library to find out if nonstudents in the community may use it.

The average public library offers a number of services to the community. Depending on the size of the library and the needs and interests of the people in that area, the following may be available:

Books: In most libraries, some books may be taken home for short periods (usually about two weeks), while other "reference" books may not be taken out of the library. Reference books include dictionaries, encyclopedias, directories of all types, and other guides that are used very often. Generally, the reference collection is all together in one part of the library. The regular collection (generally the books that may be taken out of the library) includes novels, history books, science books, and books on thousands of other topics, from macrame and knitting to sailing boats and carpentry. In a few libraries, usually school libraries, no books may be taken out; all have to be used in the library.

Periodicals (Newspapers, Journals, Magazines): Most libraries keep a collection of recent periodicals. Large libraries sometimes have issues going back many years. This is particularly useful if you can't afford newspaper or magazine subscriptions, yet wish to keep up with what's going on. Usually the periodical collection is all together in the library, often with the most recent issues of newspapers and magazines displayed in special racks.

Children's Collections: Some libraries have a special section just for children, often with smaller tables and chairs. Sometimes there are special story-reading sessions that you can send your children to while you spend time in the rest of the library.

Films and Records: Some libraries also have film and record collections, and individual items may be borrowed for short periods. The film collections can be especially useful for community groups or adult education classes because they are free. Often it would cost you quite a bit if you had to rent films yourself. Some libraries also lend out audiovisual equipment (movie projectors, screens, etc.). The films you find in libraries tend to be educational in nature (health, family relations, history, and so on); it's unusual to find many commercial films in library collections, though there are exceptions to this.

Desks and Tables and a Quiet Atmosphere for Reading and Studying: Many people don't have a quiet atmosphere at home in which they can read or study. Libraries provide this feature.

Free Advice on Where to Find What You Want: Every library has at least one librarian whose main job it is to advise people on how to use the library and where to look for the books or other services they want. Especially if you haven't used a library much before, you should take advantage of this service. Librarians expect people to be a little confused at first, and usually they are very helpful.

Other Special Programs and Services: Many libraries also run programs for the blind (they have books in Braille or special long-playing records). Some libraries also run remedial reading programs for adults or put on special events like concerts or films for the benefit of the community. Often libraries will display the work of local artists or distribute brochures for community organizations.

Library Tours: Most libraries run special tours to help acquaint people with the services of the library, teach them how to look up books, and tell them about the different collections and how they are arranged. These tours are free, a lot of fun, and very informative. They will help you get over that feeling of being overwhelmed by all those books.

Some Other Information on Libraries

1. In most libraries, each book is assigned a number, referred to as a "call number." All books in a certain subject area, say, music history, have call numbers that begin the same way, and they are all grouped together in one part of the library, usually on one shelf.

2. In some libraries, the books are shelved in alphabetical order by author. In others, some books are shelved according to subject, and therefore by call number, while others are shelved alphabetically by the author's last name (fiction, in particular, is often shelved in this way). If you take a library tour, this will all be explained to you, and you will be shown where the different sections (music, history, art, etc.) are located.

3. Libraries have card files (often called card catalogues) for all books. Generally, the card catalogues are arranged by subject, by author, and by title. In some libraries, all three are filed together in the same drawers. In others, the subject catalogue is separate and the author and title catalogues are combined. If you are interested in a certain area of knowledge, but don't know the names of any books, look in the subject catalogue. If you know either the author's name or the title of the book, look in the author and title catalogue. The same book will have a card in all three places, under subject, author, and title.

4. The important information on any card is the author, the title, and the call number, which usually appears clearly marked to the right or left of the author's name. Copy down these pieces of information (in particular, the call number) on a piece of scrap paper.

5. Close by the card catalogue(s) you will find a little directory (often including a map), which tells you where in the library each call number group is to be found. Often there is also a set of directions on how to read call numbers.

6. Ask the librarian to help you if you're confused by the call number system. Remember, all call numbers on the spines of books are read from the top down, and some call numbers also contain letters of the alphabet.

7. If you take a book off the shelf, most libraries ask you <u>not to reshelve it yourself</u>. Instead, leave it at the front desk or lying on a nearby table. It will be collected and reshelved by the librarians. The reason for this is that if a book is shelved incorrectly, it could be lost for a long time.

<u>Exercise</u>:

1. The whole class should visit the closest library and, if possible, take a library tour. You may have to call in advance to arrange for one. If tours are not available, the workshop coordinator or someone who understands the library quite well should run an informal tour.

2. Each person should choose a topic that interests her. Then look in the subject catalogue and copy down the author, title, and call number of three books in that subject area (make your subject pretty specific). Now locate your three books on the shelf.

BEING AN ASSERTIVE CITIZEN OF YOUR COMMUNITY

One of the best ways to get an education, as well as a better life, out of your community is to get involved in it. In every village, town, or city there are volunteer organizations that have come together for social, political, or charitable purposes. As a member of one of these groups, you will have an opportunity to:

- Meet new people.
- Become more aware of what is going on in your community.
- Help people in need.
- Work to get better services in your community.
- Learn new skills that may later help you find a paid job, or get a better job.
- Learn more about yourself.
- Improve your self-esteem and confidence.
- Make changes in the way things are done (and have more political influence).

How do you become a community volunteer or member of a political organization? The first step is to look around you. Here are some of the many places where people volunteer their energies, and some of the things they do:

Working for Someone's Political Campaign

Possible Duties: Stuffing envelopes, arranging large mailings, running fund-raising events (like bake sales and raffles), doing door-to-door canvassing, typing, helping people register to vote, telling people about the candidate you support, arranging publicity activities, going to meetings.

Visiting Senior Citizens at a Nursing Home or in Their Own Homes

Possible Duties: Talking with people who are bedridden, reading or writing letters for them, helping to keep up their spirits, running errands, being a friend to someone.

Working for a Neighborhood Association

Possible Duties: Helping people solve housing problems, organizing people into unions to fight rent increases, working to improve garbage collection, lighting, etc., in your community.

Membership in a Parents' Group at Your Church or Synagogue

Possible Duties: Fund raising (running rummage sales, etc.), arranging for speakers to come and talk about topics of interest to families, helping out at a religious school.

Helping a Friend Do Home Repairs

Possible Duties: Painting, tearing down old walls, buying repair supplies, using electrical and hand tools, putting up wallpaper.

Being in a Welfare Union

Possible Duties: Designing and putting up posters, telling people about their welfare rights, writing and passing out leaflets, helping people file grievances against the welfare department, talking to welfare officials about improving services to welfare recipients.

Working at a Rape Crisis Center

Possible Duties: Answering a hot line, counseling and reassuring victims of rape, accompanying them to the hospital and to the police station, raising funds, talking to community groups about the program, trying to influence police responses to rape victims, political lobbying.

Working with Delinquent Youth

Possible Duties: Talking to kids, organizing recreational activities with them, being an advocate for them if they get into trouble.

Starting a Parents Anonymous Group

Possible Duties: Doing publicity, talking to community groups about child abuse, opening up your home to meetings, working with other parents to help one another keep from abusing or neglecting children.

There are several ways to get in touch with groups who need volunteer help:

1. In some towns or villages, the mayor's office can put you in touch with organizations which are looking for volunteer workers.

2. Libraries sometimes have directories of local service organizations. You could call some of these organizations and ask if they need help.

3. If there is someone you would like to see elected to a local political office, go to her or his campaign headquarters and see if volunteers are needed.

4. Check with libraries, nursing homes, hospitals, schools, and any organizations involved in helping people or in political work. For some volunteer activities you get interviewed just as you would for a paid job. Dress as you would for a regular interview, and try to look alert and enthusiastic. A resume is sometimes useful (see Unit IV, Chapter 2, for information on resumes). Note: People you've worked with as a volunteer can be useful as future job references.

5. Ask around among your friends for other places that are looking for volunteers. Sometimes it's a good idea to volunteer with a friend.

CONCLUSION

Getting involved in your community can put new meaning into your life. It can also give you skills and experiences, and a new self-confidence that will help you when you look for paid jobs.

Exercise:

1. Make a list on the blackboard of all the community or volunteer organizations people in the class have worked for. Also include volunteer work done for friends or family.

2. Next, list all the skills they might have picked up or things they learned in their volunteer work, for example, learning to work with people, learning to get along with people who have different views from their own, typing, cooking, organizing social activities, publicity work, etc.

UNIT III - Career Exploration

Chapter 1 - Exploring Work Values

OBJECTIVE: To learn what work values are and to decide what values are most important for you.

What do people get out of the jobs they do, and what do they look for in a job? Is it really just a question of money? Everyone has different values. Read these four stories and decide what is important to the person in each one.

1. Susanna: "I like my job as an electrician, because it allows me to use both my hands and my brain. Also, I'm learning a skill I'll have for the rest of my life, and it pays me a lot more than being a secretary. Best of all, I'm my own boss and people respect me. I don't feel helpless any more when it comes to tools or doing things with my hands."

2. Janelle: "The good thing about my secretarial job is that I feel like I get things done. I see a letter I've typed in its finished form. Another thing is that I don't take my work home with me; once 5 p.m. rolls around, I don't have to think about my job at all until the next day. My leisure time is my own. I like it that I'm good and careful with my work.

"I don't like the fact that I'm not given enough responsibility or respect. Also, I'm not paid very well, and I resent the fact that I'm never supposed to be late for work, yet my boss can come in or leave when he wants, which usually means coming in at 10 and leaving at 4."

3. Deborah: "The best thing about my job as a nurse is that I feel I'm really helping people. I'm needed. Also, I have a skill that is helpful in other parts of my life. It's true that the hours are sometimes bad, but to me that's not as important as the good things."

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Valerie: "I need a job that still lets me spend time with my children, who are pretty young. Also, I want a job that prepares me for getting a full-time career when my children are a little older. I want a job that could pay me a lot of money in the future, though maybe not right now. My parents never had enough money and I don't want to have to worry like they did."

_____

_____

_____

_____

Discussion:

Form small groups of about six people each to discuss:

1. The worst job I ever had--what was bad about it?

2. The best job I ever had--what was good about it?

For these two questions, don't forget to include being a mother and homemaker. That's a job, too, even if it's usually not a paid job. Also, you can talk about a part of a job. Maybe there were some tasks you hated and others you liked. What were these and why?

Examples of good things about a job might be: making good money; job was interesting; job used your talents; you were working with nice people; job let you see your children; job was outside, which you liked; people respected you; you were good at what you did; nobody bossed you around; you got to work at what you wanted; job was fairly secure; you felt you achieved something; job had good benefits; there was a good chance of advancement, etc.

Examples of bad things about the job might be: underpaid; repetitive and boring; you felt you were expendable; you were treated like a machine instead of a person; your boss was racist or sexist; people treated you as if you were stupid; people ordered you around and didn't respect you; job was dangerous or dirty, etc.

Task:

After the whole class has come back together, each person should complete the following:

1. Write down five things that are pretty important to you in any job you take.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

   d. _____

   e. _____

2. Fill in this inventory of values by circling the number that corresponds to what you feel. There are no right or wrong answers.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME IN A JOB?

	Not Important		Important		Very Important
1. Using my mind	5	4	3	2	1
2. Being good at my job, whatever it is	5	4	3	2	1
3. Using my hands	5	4	3	2	1
4. Having a job where I make many decisions on my own	5	4	3	2	1
5. Having a job that allows me a lot of leisure time	5	4	3	2	1
6. If I'm married, having a job that pays less than my husband's job	5	4	3	2	1
7. Having a job that won't move me away from my hometown	5	4	3	2	1

		Not Important				Very Important
8.	Working with people who respect me	5	4	3	2	1
9.	Working in a job where I'm an individual, not one face in hundreds	5	4	3	2	1
10.	Working in a job where I'm my own boss and I'm responsible only to myself	5	4	3	2	1
11.	If I have small children, an outside job that is close to home or that allows me time to see them often	5	4	3	2	1
12.	If I'm a homemaker, an outside job that leaves me enough time to do my other work	5	4	3	2	1
13.	A job that brings me into contact with a lot of people	5	4	3	2	1
14.	A job that's prestigious	5	4	3	2	1
15.	A job that pays a lot of money, even if it is otherwise a terrible job (because it goes against everything else I value)	5	4	3	2	1
16.	A job which has a lot of possibilities for advancement	5	4	3	2	1
17.	A job which uses my special talents	5	4	3	2	1
18.	A job which is challenging	5	4	3	2	1
19.	A job where I feel needed	5	4	3	2	1
20.	A job where I feel I'm helping to change the world for the better	5	4	3	2	1
21.	A job which has a lot of variety	5	4	3	2	1
22.	A job which allows me to be a leader	5	4	3	2	1
23.	A job with good benefits: health insurance for me and my family, a retirement fund, sick leave, paid vacations, etc.	5	4	3	2	1

	Not Important				Very Important
24. A job with a lot of security	5	4	3	2	1
25. A job with the city, state, or federal government	5	4	3	2	1
26. A job in private industry	5	4	3	2	1
27. A job in a nonprofit organization	5	4	3	2	1

In the next few spaces, put down any important values from your previous list that weren't mentioned in the inventory.

_____	5	4	3	2	1
_____	5	4	3	2	1
_____	5	4	3	2	1
_____	5	4	3	2	1
_____	5	4	3	2	1

3. For the last part of this task, decide which of the values you feel are <u>most important</u>. Do this by choosing among the ones you already decided were "very important." If you get stuck, try this: Suppose you check as very important "A job which has a lot of possibilities for advancement" and "If I have small children, an outside job that is close to home or which allows me to see them often." Imagine for a moment that you are offered two jobs. In Job 1, you would have a good chance for promotion, but you would be able to spend less time with your children. Job 2 <u>would</u> let you spend extra time with your children, but it is totally dead-end. Which would you choose? Make that number one. Keep going until you have figured out the five things that are most important to you. Write them down in order of importance, most important first. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers; your values are your own.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

   d. _____

   e. _____

When you look at possible careers in the following pages, keep asking yourself, "Is this the kind of job I want? Does it fit in with my values?" You won't necessarily find the perfect job that way, but at least you can get closer to a job that satisfies you and meets your needs.

Chapter 2 - Knowing Your Skills

OBJECTIVE: To learn to recognize your skills and relate them to things you've done in the past.

What do you have to offer to an employer? What are the assets or skills you possess that might be useful in a career? Salable skills can be anything from good health, friendliness, and an ability to work hard to being able to type, run a computer program, care for animals, cook for large groups, or fish. Salable skills come from the education you have had (elementary school, high school, college, other training courses), all your past jobs, your volunteer activities, your life experiences (child rearing, etc.), and the things you do for fun (sports, hobbies, etc.). It's important in finding a career to market those things you <u>think</u> you would do well, even if you haven't tried them yet. Many people win jobs solely on the basis of being willing to take the risk of doing something they've never done before. It's a valuable asset. Willingness to learn new skills and/or improve old ones are also assets that are highly prized by employers.

In the next unit, you will learn how to present your assets to other people through personal resumes, job applications, and job interviews. In this chapter we will begin exploring what those assets are. Knowing your assets is part of self-awareness, and self-awareness is part of being a happier, more directed person.

A lot of people, especially women, are embarrassed when they have to talk about their good points. They worry that people will think they are snobbish or conceited. People are more used to talking or thinking about their bad points and they often tend to underestimate their abilities. This habit leads to a low sense of self-esteem and keeps you from living up to your full potential. It can also keep you from getting a good job that really uses your skills.

<u>Exercise</u>:

Take a piece of paper, divide it into four columns, and write at the top of each column something you are proud of having done in your life. Be fairly specific. Put your name on the paper.

These are examples of the sorts of things you might write, but put down <u>anything</u> you've done that you're proud of.

1. I raised my daughter, who is retarded. It was a lot of work, but now she is doing really well and has a job.

2. I built a bookshelf all by myself using an electric saw.

3. I studied for and got my GED certificate.

4. I was just made publicity chairperson for the Filipino Community Association.

5. I'll have held my job at the packing plant for fifteen years come September.

The workshop coordinator picks out several papers at random and writes four statements from them on the board with columns underneath. The class brainstorms skills that the person would have picked up or shown while doing the thing that she's proud of. For instance:

Raising Daughter Who Is Retarded	Building a Bookshelf
Knows more than the average person about mental retardation and training the retarded	Experience with electric saw, electric drill, screwdriver, wood glue, and buying lumber
Is patient	Willing to work with her hands
Doesn't give up when frustrated	Knows some basic carpentry skills
Good teacher	Good at overcoming challenges
Experience with a retarded person	Interested in learning new skills
Hard worker, motivated	Isn't bound by traditional views of what a woman can do
Committed to her daughter's welfare	Brave
	Task-oriented/follows things through

The workshop coordinator returns the papers she has borrowed. Now the class breaks up into small groups of about six people each. Each person reads her paper aloud; then her group thinks of skills that show up in the things she's done. By the end of the session, each person should have a list of skills and characteristics to go with her four statements. If there is time, the class can also think up other jobs that might fit with each group of skills.

CONCLUSION

This exercise represents only the very beginning of the exploration of your skills. It's up to you to start thinking about your whole life in terms of what you do well. Each person has a unique collection of skills and you need to work on discovering yours. Think about all aspects of your life when you are assessing your skills. Areas in which you've received formal training are important, but remember that you learn just as much, if not more, through your family and social relationships, your volunteer activities, work experience, and recreation.

Chapter 3 - Career Assessment Tests

OBJECTIVE: To take a career assessment test and discuss the experience with other people in the class.

Career Preference Measures are designed to put your values and skills together and come out with the name of a job or career that fits you. A lot of these measures are in the form of tests, and because the answers are hard to evaluate (often there is no "right" answer), they are usually fed into a computer or put through a complicated sorting mechanism. No career measures are perfect. You shouldn't believe everything they say, but you can get valuable hints from them about possible careers.

WHAT ARE THE DANGER AREAS IN CAREER ASSESSMENT TESTS?

1. Sometimes the test questions are confusing or unclear. Seemingly minor questions answered in a certain way may eliminate a lot of possible careers from your final list.

   Solution: Where possible, ask the person giving the test what a question means and try to get an idea of what jobs it relates to.

2. Sometimes tests are culturally biased. That means they use terms or ideas that are familiar to some groups of people but not to others. For example, there are words that a person from one background will understand, while a person from another background will not--a different word may be used in her or his culture for a particular idea or thing, or it may not be an important concept in the culture. If such a word is used in a test, it will not be understood by everyone, not because of stupidity, but because the test is only "fair" for certain groups and not for everyone.

   Cultural bias can be very subtle, but it can have a great effect on the outcome of the test. Some tests also contain a sex bias. Women are automatically eliminated from certain jobs regardless of their answers, or questions are asked so as to discourage women from answering them in a way that would point them to certain jobs.

   Solution: If you suspect a test is culturally biased or sexist, ask to take another test and talk to the test administrator about the first one. (If possible, get several friends to come with you.) Don't ever take these tests too seriously, even if you don't detect any unfairness. No test is perfect and no test is the last word on what jobs are right for you. Career assessment tests can only suggest possibilities.

97

3. Some people just don't take tests well. This may have nothing to do with how smart they are, or how qualified for a particular job. Maybe they just freeze up on tests. Many very bright, very creative people do badly on standardized tests.

   Solution: If you are one of those people who do not test well, let the people giving the test know this. Tell them that the results don't really reflect your true abilities. Career tests are useful to some people, but not to everyone. If you don't take tests well, use other means to match yourself with careers.

4. Two common problem areas in tests (especially where women are concerned) are questions about math ability and questions about lifting heavy objects. Most women underestimate their abilities in both these areas.

   Solution: On math ability, don't rate yourself "low" unless you can't do any math at all. Most women's math abilities are higher than they think.

   As for lifting heavy objects, almost any woman who has ever lifted a baby, carried groceries, or done housework has done heavy lifting. Many women who come across a question on heavy lifting in an assessment test check "no weight," even though they're perfectly capable of lifting quite heavy things. Many jobs which supposedly require heavy lifting will require it only a few times a month, or the employer supplies lifts or carts. Often the so-called heavy lifting jobs are also high-paying jobs, so you don't want to cut them out of your range of possibilities.

Exercise:

Take the career preference test most often used in your area. Keep in mind what you now know about tests. Get together in a group after everyone has finished and discuss the test.

1. Did you feel it was a culturally fair test?

2. Was the way the test was set up confusing or badly explained (i.e., answer sheets hard to follow, words with several meanings, poor directions, not enough time)?

3. Was the test at all useful to you in deciding on jobs that would be right for you?

4. Do you think this is a fair test to give to people in high schools? Is it fair for older women? For people of different ethnic backgrounds? For people from rural areas, as opposed to urban areas?

5. What can you do as a group if you feel that a test is unfair? Whom could you approach with your criticisms?

Chapter 4 - Nontraditional Jobs For Women

OBJECTIVE: To explore nontraditional jobs and how to get them.

WHAT ARE NONTRADITIONAL JOBS FOR WOMEN?

One of the best ways to answer this question is to ask what are "traditional" jobs for women. As of April 1974, 40 percent of all women workers in the U.S. were concentrated in only ten occupations: secretary, retail trade salesperson, bookkeeper, domestic worker, elementary school teacher, waitress, typist, cashier, sewer and stitcher, and registered nurse.[1] In 1973, more than 11 million American women, or over one-third of all women workers, were employed in clerical work. Another 7 million women were employed in service jobs, i.e., jobs involving domestic tasks such as preparing or serving meals, making beds, cleaning, doing laundry, and caring for children.[2] The majority of jobs that women hold are low-paying jobs (often at the minimum wage or below), with few benefits.

> In 1973, the median income of all women employed full-time was only 57 percent that of men. This earning gap is getting worse, not better.[3]
>
> A secretary with 13.2 years of education makes 38 percent less than a truck driver (usually male) with a ninth grade education.[4]

The term nontraditional job is often used to refer to blue-collar jobs. These can range anywhere from relatively low-paid, nonunion assembly-line work to highly skilled union jobs in carpentry, mechanics, or electrical work. In between, there is a wide variety of semiskilled and skilled jobs, either union or nonunion. Women who work in blue-collar jobs (only about 14.5 percent of all working women in 1974) are concentrated in the lowest paid, least skilled jobs with the worst working conditions--for instance, jobs in canneries or textile factories. However, this situation is beginning to change.

---

[1] 1975 Handbook on Women Workers, Bulletin 297 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Employment Standards Administration, 1975), p. 91.

[2] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[3] Ibid., p. 131.

[4] Information provided by ERA America.

The decades of the '60s and '70s have seen a sudden influx of women into predominately male fields such as skilled crafts. For example, between 1960 and 1970, the number of employed women carpenters increased from 3,300 to about 11,000. Women electricians increased from 2,500 to about 8,700, and women machinists from 6,700 to about 11,800.* In terms of the total number of people in these occupations, this represents only a very small percentage of workers, but it is still a significant trend.

WHY ARE WOMEN MOVING INTO MORE HIGHLY SKILLED BLUE-COLLAR JOBS?

Perhaps the main incentive is the high pay; even in the semiskilled union jobs, you can make between $6.50 and $9.00 per hour. This is considerably more than you would make cleaning houses, waitressing, or typing, even if you'd been doing those jobs for twenty years. People who have gone through specialized training, such as an apprenticeship or a company training program, may make $14.00 or more an hour once they finish (they are paid some percentage of that figure while they are in training).

Another reason for going into a nontraditional occupation is that you can start right on the job, either as a trainee or as a regular worker, with just a high school degree or a GED certificate. For the more competitive programs, it also helps to have had some sort of experience with manual work--say, shop or drafting courses in high school. Some apprenticeship programs require that you pass an examination, but they also offer tutoring to help you pass.

Many women are choosing to move into the trades because they like learning a practical skill. Traditionally, women have not been taught to use most tools, to fix cars, or to do many of the other maintenance jobs that are so important in the modern world. Now, for the first time, substantial numbers of women are finding not only that they can do these things, but that they can be good at them.

> "It gives me such a great feeling to be able to wire a whole house, especially when I think that a few years ago, I couldn't have even told you what a toggle switch was. Now I can do the whole job on my own. It gives me a real feeling of satisfaction."
>
> -Patricia, an electrician

Another big reason why women are moving into nontraditional fields is that these jobs represent a challenge. Women in the trades are blazing new trails, and that in itself can be a real experience. These women work hard and sometimes have to face initial hostility from co-workers, but in return

---

*1975 Handbook on Women Workers, pp. 92-93.

they get good pay and a sense of satisfaction about their work. In the long run, they are also tending to win the respect of co-workers because they are showing that women can really do the job as well as men.

GETTING STARTED IN NONTRADITIONAL JOBS

STEP 1: Assess your abilities and interests

a. Are you physically fit? If not, you might consider starting a regular fitness program. Manual labor isn't constant exertion, but the better shape you're in, the better you will feel about your work and, as with any job, you will want to make a good impression right away.

b. What kinds of physical or manual activities have you been involved in before, either for pay, on a volunteer basis, or in your own home? Have you done simple carpentry? Helped anyone (say, your father, brother, or husband) repair a car? Helped renovate a house? Done loading or carrying? Driven large vehicles? Taken a drafting or shop course? If you haven't done any of these jobs, you are strongly advised to get some education in these areas before seeking a nontraditional job. Look for someone you know who does these things and try to get some experience. See if your local YWCA, women's center, or other community organization has skills programs for women. If they don't, suggest that they start some.

STEP 2: Do some research

a. Read about blue-collar jobs in the Occupational Outlook Handbook (see Resources in Chapter 5, "Finding Information about Careers").

b. Try to get a sense of the "blue-collar environment" by talking to people you know who work in blue-collar jobs, taking any courses you can find that will help you get acquainted with tools, and seeing if there is any information on women in the trades available in your community. Many large cities now have programs for women wanting to enter trades and/or they have "women in trade" counsels or support networks.

c. Find out about your rights as a worker. You're at a big advantage if you know the law regarding equal employment opportunities and affirmative action in recruitment, employment, and training. If you have a particular interest in this area, read the federal regulations entitled "Equal Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training," adopted in May 1978 (see Resources in this chapter for information about ordering a copy).

KINDS OF JOBS THAT ARE AVAILABLE

1. Unskilled jobs, such as delivery truck driver, assembly line worker, and messenger service. These jobs are usually low paying, involve poor working conditions, and are often nonunion, but they are fairly easy to find. Many women start out in these kinds of jobs to gain experience; then they move into apprenticeships or other training programs.

2. Semiskilled union work, such as warehouse and longshore workers, ship painters and scalers, sign painters and display workers. These are physical jobs which don't require enormous skill, but pay well because they are union jobs ($6.50 to $9.00 an hour). It is difficult to get into the unions, and there are a finite number of such openings. Availability will vary in different parts of the country.

3. Skilled jobs with large companies which are usually unionized, such as telephone installers, meter readers, and water control inspectors. These jobs pay fairly well, though not as high as craft work in the building trades. Most of them are occupations that would not be transferable to other companies, because they are specific to a particular company. Benefits are good and there is year-round employment and job security.

4. Work for nonunion contractors in the building trades. There are usually no benefits, and working conditions can vary, depending on the whim of the employer. The pay can go up to $8.00 an hour, depending on the worker's skill. Since there are no formal training programs, the problem is getting trained.

5. Free-lance work in the skilled trades. Free-lance workers receive their training at community colleges, get experience working for nonunion contractors, and then go into business for themselves.*

6. Skilled work in the building trades. This is the best-paid form of blue-collar work and it requires the most extensive training. Prospective workers apply to apprenticeship programs. These are training programs in each trade, developed by local joint apprenticeship committees. Apprenticeship programs consist of both hands-on work at a real work site (for which you are paid and receive benefits) and classroom work (usually in the form of night classes). Classes are free. After you complete your apprenticeship, which takes from two to five years, depending on the program and the amount of available work, you reach "journey status,"

---

*The description of the first five blue-collar categories is taken from Apprenticeship and Other Blue Collar Job Opportunities for Women, by Valerie Wheat in consultation with Christie Niebel (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Women's Educational Equity Act, 1978), p. 1.

and you are then entitled to full journey-level pay, which quite often is $10.00 per hour or higher.

SOME WAYS TO GET TRAINING

1. If you're still at the stage of wondering if a nontraditional job is for you, do some work on your own or with someone you know to gain familiarity with tools.

2. When you're seriously considering going into a trade:

   a. Take shop, drafting, and mathematics in high school.

   b. Take shop, drafting, or other classes in a community college, if you've already finished high school.

   c. Take a relatively unskilled manual job to gain some experience.

   d. Get into a pre-apprenticeship program for women if one exists in your area.

3. When you've definitely decided to go into a trade and you have a basic familiarity with the necessary skills:

   a. Go through a whole program of study in a community college, vocational, or technical school.

   b. Apply for a company training program, such as small equipment repair or telephone installation. Sometimes it's easier to get into these if you already work for the company.

   c. Apply for an apprenticeship program in the trade that interests you.

GETTING INTO BLUE-COLLAR JOBS AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Women have an initial disadvantage when they try to get into the better paid blue-collar jobs, because they tend to have had less experience than men with tools, manual work, or fixing things. Most of this is due to upbringing. Girls tend to be discouraged from learning things like carpentry or auto mechanics, while boys from a very early age are given miniature tool kits, toy cars, and the chance to assist older men (usually their fathers) with routine maintenance tasks. Until very recently, girls were not allowed to take shop classes in high school, and they were seen as unfeminine if they showed an interest in or talent for something like electrical work. This kind of stereotyping by sex is now beginning to change, but many women entering the trades for the first time are finding that they have to work hard to catch up with the men. To prepare women for blue-collar jobs, including apprenticeships, there are now a number of programs around the country to introduce women to skills they never learned when they were growing up.

Anyone who applies for a blue-collar job or for a training program must convince the employer or the training board that he or she can do the job. Because you're a woman, you probably will have to work harder at being convincing than a man would. Apprenticeship programs are the most competitive of all blue-collar training opportunities. Though there usually are no hard and fast requirements other than willingness to do the work, a joint apprenticeship committee (usually four to six people) may judge you on the basis of an interview, in which you will be asked to answer questions like the following:

1. Are you confident of your ability to do the job and enthusiastic about the trade you want to enter?

2. Have you had prior experience with technical work through one or more of the following:

   a. Helping a family member in his or her trade?

   b. Doing something technical in your spare time, like working on cars, doing carpentry, working on stereo components, etc.?

   c. Taking shop, drafting, or other technical courses, either in high school or in a community college?

   d. Holding down an unskilled or semiskilled manual job?

3. Did you have average to good grades in mathematics in high school or did you get an above average score on the math skills section of the GED test? Most trades do require a high school degree or equivalent, and a few want you to have passed high school algebra with a grade of "C" or better.

4. Have you passed a general aptitude test? Usually this covers spatial relationships, mechanical reasoning, vocabulary, basic math and algebra. Some trades also require a qualifying test whose score is combined with your interview score.

5. Are you physically fit? You don't have to be big or muscular; in fact, there are plenty of small, slight women in the trades. However, you do need to let the interviewers know that you're strong enough to do the job. Different trades require different degrees of strength. It's a good idea to look into the physical demands of the trade you're interested in, just as you would investigate the requirements of any other type of job.

If all this seems a bit scary, keep in mind that the main thing the committee wants to know is whether you can do the job. The interview is the most important part of the whole process, and most committees are very flexible about the other areas.

Other training opportunities vary in how competitive they are to get into. Some are not competitive at all. Convincing an employer to hire you is always competitive, but being enthusiastic, knowing what you're getting

into, and being in relatively good physical condition are the main qualifications for most blue-collar jobs. Every bit of prior experience helps.

FURTHER TIPS ON BLUE-COLLAR JOBS, INCLUDING APPRENTICESHIPS

1. When you go out looking for a job, dress appropriately. Don't wear a skirt or high heels. These are not appropriate for manual jobs and will not impress an employer. Plain slacks, sensible shoes, and little or no makeup will inspire a lot more confidence in a board or an employer. If you are going to an interview at a job site, look ready to go to work--that is, wear clean work clothes and work boots.

2. Apprenticeship programs usually have upper age limits, which tend to be in the mid-twenties (higher for veterans). Especially now, with new federal regulations requiring that apprenticeship programs increase the number of women apprentices, many apprenticeship committees do not always stick strictly to these limits. Find out what the age limit is for the trade you want to go into. If you are already overage, apply anyway, but prepare to work especially hard at proving your ability and dedication. In practice, these age limits tend to discriminate against women, first, because women often spend their late teens and early twenties raising children and second, because women up until very recently have had to pick up technical skills <u>after</u> high school.

3. Keep trying. It sometimes takes quite a while to get into an apprenticeship program or convince an employer to hire you, though affirmative action regulations are starting to speed up the process. Many apprenticeship programs are still not very open to taking women, and employers still tend to wonder whether women can really do the job. Prove that you can.

4. Because you are going into a field that has traditionally had few women, you are likely at some point to run into hostility, harassment, and loneliness on the job. Find a support network of some kind, preferably among other women involved in the trades. Learn to be cool, but assertive. Look for allies of either sex.

CONCLUSION

Nontraditional jobs are a new and challenging area for women. They can supply you with a skill you will have for the rest of your life, as well as with a bigger paycheck. It is not easy to break into nontraditional jobs, but thousands of women have already proven that it can be done, and in the next decade their numbers are likely to swell.

In the long run, nontraditional jobs for women may prove to have importance in the political, as well as the personal, realm. Here a woman in a nontraditional job talks about what it means for her:

"If a woman ever wants to consider the option of self-reliance and true personal independence, she has to acquire practical abilities. Personally, the most tangible effect of my learning to work on cars, other than making more money, has been the confidence I have gained about doing tasks that would usually only be assigned to men, things like fixing a toaster, replacing a stove pipe, etc. There's a lot of freedom in that. In fact, I wonder how I survived so long being so afraid of every little technical malfunction.

"In the broader sense, I think women need to consider nontraditional occupations if they are ever to have any real political power. High-level decisions are made these days on the basis of technical advice, whether about energy projects or production levels in industry. You can't take a whole group that is ignorant of technology and expect them to have much power or influence on these vital questions."

-Liz, an auto mechanic

Task:

If you were applying right now for a nontraditional job, what experiences in your background might help you get the job? Be sure to include any tools you know how to use and any technical or manual kinds of work (repair jobs, heavy lifting, etc.) that you've done around your own home or with someone in your family.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Discussion:

Break up into small groups of about six people each. Pick a recorder, and after the discussion, report back to the class on what you have decided.

1. In your own childhood and teenage years, were you encouraged to prepare for the more traditional women's jobs? If so, how? Were you ever encouraged to learn any technical skills? If you have a brother, was he brought up differently from you?

2. How can girls be better prepared while they are young to have a real choice in later life between traditional and nontraditional careers? If you had a daughter, would you raise her differently from the way you were raised? If so, how?

3. What is the role of peer pressure in keeping women in traditionally female jobs? Is public opinion shifting toward letting women do any kinds of jobs they want?

RESOURCES

Blue Collar Trades Handbook for Women, 1977.

Contains excellent suggestions on where to look for jobs and whom to talk to, along with other useful information. Available from Women Working in Construction, 1854 Wyoming Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009; $3.50 to institutions, $2.00 to individuals.

Directory of Accredited Private Trade and Technical Schools.

Available from National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, Director of Distribution, Room 440, 2021 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036; free.

"Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training." Federal Register 43:93 (May 12, 1978, Part 4):20760-20772.

Reprints are available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402; $0.75.

"Goals and Timetables for Female and Minority Participation in the Construction Industry." Federal Register 43:68 (April 7, 1978, Part 4):14888-14905.

Reprints are available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402; $0.75.

Wetherby, Terry. Conversations: Working Women Talk about Doing a "Man's Job". Millbrae, Calif.: Les Femmes Publishing, 1977, 269 pp.

Includes conversations with a butcher, welder, truck driver, carpenter, handyperson, and electrical mechanic. Available for $4.05 from Les Femmes, 231 Adrian Road, Millbrae, CA 94030.

Wheat, Valerie, in consultation with Christie Niebel. Apprenticeship and Other Blue Collar Job Opportunities for Women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Women's Educational Equity Act, 1978.

A very complete guide (30 pages), which includes finding a blue-collar job, requirements for apprenticeship, profiles of blue-collar women, and a listing of projects which train and place women in nontraditional jobs. Available for $2.50 from Women's Educational Equity Communications Network, Far West Laboratory, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

A Woman's Guide to Apprenticeship. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1978, 24 pp.

Available from Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210; single copy free.

Women in Nontraditional Employment: A Selected List of Publications, Slides, and Films. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1978, 7 pp.

Available from Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210; single copy free.

Chapter 5 - Finding Information On Careers

OBJECTIVE: To learn what questions to ask in researching a career, and to practice researching a career or two.

It's up to you to find out the real story on careers that interest you. Only you can make the final decision. There are several ways to find out about a particular career:

1. Look in a book that lists careers and answers commonly asked questions about them. Some of these books will be available from your workshop coordinator, and several books are listed at the end of this chapter. These or others like them are probably available at your local employment agency, library, school guidance office, or bookstore.

2. Ask people who work in the type of job that interests you to tell you about their experiences. Often they will be happy to be put in the position of "experts," even if they've never seen you before.

3. Contact an association or group connected with the career that interests you. This may be a labor union, a professional association, or even an occupational journal. See if brochures are available for people wanting to enter the field. You can get the addresses of such sources from books on careers or from national directories (usually available in libraries). With labor unions, there may be a local in your area that you could visit to pick up informational literature or to find people willing to talk.

Task:

Now take two careers that interest you, and by looking in the different books, answer these questions about them. Don't worry if you can't answer every question; the information may not be in any of the books. Just fill in as many as you can. Share books with other people if necessary, and ask about, or look up, words you don't understand. Investigate at least one career that is something other than clerical work, waitressing, salesclerking, or domestic service. You may want to photocopy the questions on the next two pages so you can use them for two different career explorations. If that's not possible, use a blank sheet of paper.

For the career you are looking into:

1. What skills are usually required? _____

_____

_____

2. What kind of preparation is usually required? (Education? Licensing? Apprenticeship? Special esperience? Just an interest in the job? _____

_____

_____

3. What would your duties be? _____

_____

_____

4. Is there an entry-level job in this area--that is, a beginning-type job that would let you "learn the ropes" and from which you could move up to a more challenging job in the same field?

_____

_____

_____

5. What is the average beginning wage? (This will be higher in some states than others.) _____

_____

6. What values do you think would fit in with the job? (Hint: These are called aptitudes in some books.) Look back at pages 91-94 for your values. Does this job involve working with people? Helping others? Being outside, etc.? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What is the employment outlook nationwide for this job? Good? Balanced? Bad? Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What is the employment outlook in your area? (Contact your local employment agencies or state Department of Labor to investigate this, or look in a book about trends in your state. Maybe there are many jobs in this field two states away, but very few in the state where you live.) _____

_____

_____

Exercise:

Each person should stand up and report on one or both of the jobs she has researched.

RESOURCES

Arnold, Walter M., ed. Career Opportunities for Technicians and Specialists. 5 vols. Chicago: J.G. Ferguson Publishing, 1969-70.

Information on marketing, business and office specialists, health technicians, engineering technicians, agricultural forestry and oceanographic technicians, and community service and related specialists. Includes information on entry-level jobs.

Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 4th ed. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Employment Service, 1977.

This book gives brief descriptions of thousands of different jobs and can be found in almost every library in the country.

Jobs for Which You Can Qualify if You're a High School Graduate. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979.

Short summaries of a number of jobs. Particularly useful for its discussion of blue-collar opportunities. Many libraries have this and the other books in this series.

Jobs for Which you Probably Will Need a College Education. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979.

Very useful information on a number of professional and technical jobs.

Jobs for Which You Probably Will Need Some College or Specialized Training. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1979.

Particularly good on some health occupations, but includes a lot of other information as well.

Lederer, Muriel. The Guide to Career Education. New York: Quadrangle/ New York Times Book Co., 1975.

Describes 200 occupations that do not require a college degree.

Mitchell, Joyce Slayton. I Can Be Anything: Careers and Colleges for Young Women. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1975.

Fairly complete descriptions of many different types of jobs, plus stories about women who hold them. Order from College Board Publication Orders, Box 2815, Princeton, NJ 08540; $4.50.

Occupational Outlook Handbook. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1978-79.

An indispensable book that gives the complete rundown on thousands of careers. It contains an excellent, though slightly confusing, index, and it's a book that can be found in just about every library. If your local school or public library doesn't have it, ask that it be ordered from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, Order No. 029-001-02059-7.

Terkel, Studs. Working. New York: Avon Books, 1974.

A best-selling book of interviews with people from many different occupations. It reads like an adventure story, but contains a lot of useful information as well. Costs about $2.25.

Chapter 6 - Setting Goals For Your Career

OBJECTIVE: To learn to develop plans of action and to write short- and long-term career objectives.

Exercise: Defining Career Goals

STEP 1: *Fill in the following career inventory and the form called "The Way to Get There" (see Example).*

Name of Career_____

What is the minimum level of education required to enter this career at the bottom level?	What do you have already?
High school not necessary_____	_____
High school degree or equivalent _____	What do you still need?
1 to 2 years of college or other training _____	_____
4 years of college _____	_____

Does the bottom-level position require special courses, training, or licensing?	What have you done?
Yes_____ No_____	_____
How long does this generally take?	_____
_____	What do you still need?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What kinds of experience do you need to start in this career?	Which do you have?
Required: _____	_____
_____	_____
Helpful: _____	What do you still need?
_____	_____
_____	_____

What kinds of personal characteristics are necessary for this job?	What do you need to work on?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

THE WAY TO GET THERE

What do I still need?	What is standing in my way?	How can I get over the things in my way? Solutions:	Starting and finishing date

EXAMPLE

THE WAY TO GET THERE

What do I still need?	What is standing in my way?	How can I get over the things in my way? Solutions:	Starting and finishing date
B.S. in Forestry Science (4 years of college)	a. Don't have money for tuition	a. Investigate scholarships and loans	a. When I get school catalogues, I will research how to get money (by April 1
	b. Might not be able to get into a school	b. Apply to a lot of different schools	b. Research schools in College Blue Book; look especially at U. of Wash. and U. of Alaska--close by (finish by March 1)
	c. No forestry courses at the community college in my area	c. Look into other universities and decide where I would like to go	c. Write for application and college catalogues (by April 1)
	d. Not sure I can do it	d. Read some books on forestry so I will be prepared to talk about it in an intelligent way; look for a correspondence course in forestry; bone up in biology; keep telling myself I can do it	d. Visit some people working in forestry to talk to them about it (by April 15)
	e. Don't want to be the only woman in the classes	e. Look for a school that has quite a few women	e. When writing for applications, ask how many women are accepted (by April 1)
	f. My GED might make it harder to get into a good program	f. Take a few courses in science at our community college; also try to get another summer job having to do with forestry; talk up 4-H, etc., in application	f. Go see guidance counselor at community college for information (see her by May 1)
	g. My SAT and ACT scores might not be good enough (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test, two standardized exams required by many colleges and universities)	g. Find out if I even need the SAT or ACT scores for the programs I'm interested in; take some practice tests	g. Check in catalogues about tests needed; buy a book with SAT practice tests and find out when they are given (as soon as catalogues come)

STEP 2: *Write a career objective.*

This should be for a job you think you're qualified for now (or for which you could be qualified with only a very small amount of training or self-education). You should try to make it a job that will give you experience toward work in your chosen career.

Example

Immediate Objective: *I am seeking a job as a beginning painter. My goal is to enter an apprenticeship program as a painter and eventually reach journey status. I am dependable and willing to work my way up from the bottom.*

STEP 3: *Now write a job objective that you might have five years from now.*

Example

Objective in Five Years: *I am a certified journey-level painter seeking employment in the Seattle area. I am dependable and experienced, I finish jobs quickly, and I come highly recommended by satisfied customers.*

Other examples of short- and long-range objectives:

Short-Range Objective: *I am seeking a beginning clerk's position in the records department of a hospital or clinic. My long-range goal is to enter a one-year college program to become a certified medical technician. I am a motivated and careful worker with a future.*

Objective in Five Years: *I am a certified medical records technician with three years of graduated employment in an urban hospital. I have recently moved to the Anchorage area, and am now seeking a position in the records department of a medical institution. I am a careful professional who comes with high recommendations.*

Short-Range Objective: *I am a seasoned volunteer worker and mother of three school-age children, now seeking a position as a child-care worker. My long-range plans include a degree in Early Childhood Education. I have already taken two courses towards an A.A. degree. I am energetic, friendly, and can supply good references.*

Objective in Five Years: *I have a B.A. degree in Early Childhood Education and am seeking an administrative position in the day-care field. I have four years of experience working in child care and can supply excellent references as to my managerial ability.*

STEP 4: *Discuss what you have written.*

Now show your objectives to a small group of about six people. Get advice from the group and from workshop leaders on how to make your objectives clearer. If you want, you can make objectives for three years from now or ten years from now. You could have several alternative short- or long-term objectives.

UNIT IV-Job Seeking

Chapter 1 - Uncovering Job Openings And Reading Job Notices

OBJECTIVE: To learn different ways to uncover job openings and how to understand job notices.

Exercise:

How do people find out about jobs? Are some kinds of jobs found one way, and other kinds of jobs other ways? Do you find lower-paying jobs differently from higher-paying, more creative ones? These are the questions we will explore in this short exercise.

STEP 1: *Write down the last five jobs you've had (if you've had that many; otherwise, put down as many as you have had). Then think back to how you first found out about each job.*

	JOB	HOW YOU FIRST HEARD ABOUT IT
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

STEP 2: *The class leader will now tally up for the entire group the ways in which you found out about jobs.*

1. You heard from a friend or family member who worked there. _____
2. You read a newspaper advertisement. _____
3. A person at an employment agency told you about the job. _____
4. You were already working for an employer and you heard about another job in the same company/agency and applied for it. _____
5. Everyone in your area knew the employer was hiring. _____
6. You dropped off or sent your resume to many different employers and then called on the phone or visited. _____

7. You dropped off or sent your resume to many different employers and one called you. _____

8. You visited an organization and found out about what kind of work it did, who the key personnel people were, and what kinds of jobs were going to open up. After talking to several people about the company, you left your resume. _____

9. You saw a notice of a job opening in a professional journal or a women's or minority publication. _____

10. You worked first as a volunteer, then were offered a job at the same place. _____

11. You set up your own business. _____

12. Other _____

_____

_____ _____

STEP 3: *Now develop a group picture of job seeking. Discuss the following questions:*

1. What is the way most used by this group to uncover job openings?

2. What are some ways this group doesn't generally use?

3. Why do most people hear about some jobs, and only a small number of people hear about other jobs? Do you look for the better-paying jobs the same way you look for the poorer-paying jobs?

4. Which of the job-seeking methods above involve expanding your circle of friends and acquaintances?

5. What will you do differently next time you're looking for a job?

READING JOB NOTICES

What to look for:

1. Consider a type of job you've never had before. Remember that jobs traditionally done by men usually pay more and have more possibility for advancement than "women's jobs," and they don't necessarily require any more education or experience. Also, employers are no longer supposed to refuse you a job just because you are a woman. (This doesn't mean they won't find some other excuse, but at least you have a chance.)

2. Want ads are full of abbreviations, and sometimes they read like a foreign language. Here are some common abbreviations found in want ads. Read them over. Some dictionaries have abbreviations sections in the back which are quite useful.

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

adv.	advertising
a.m.	morning
appt.	appointment
asst.	assistant (helper)
ben.	benefits
bet.	between
bgn.	begin or beginning
biol.	biologist
bldg.	building
bus.	business
clk.	clerk
co.	company
coll.	college
comm.	commission (pay based on how much business you do)
const.	construction
corp.	corporation
dept.	department
dir.	director
div.	division
driv.	driver (or driver's license)
elec.	electric
empl.	employment
eng.	engineer
EOE	Equal Opportunity Employer
eqpt.	equipment
etc.	and so on
eves.	evenings
exc.	excellent
exp.	experience(d)
ext.	extension (some telephones have an extension number)
ftr.	future
gd.	good
gen.	general
grad.	graduate
hosp.	hospital
hqtrs.	headquarters (main office)
hr.	hour
hrly.	hourly
H.S.	high school
hvy.	heavy
incl.	including
ind.	industrial
ins.	insurance
jr.	junior (beginner or assistant)
lic.	license
lt.	light (a little)
mach.	machine
manuf.	manufacturing (making things)
mech.	mechanic or mechanical
med.	medical
mgr.	manager
mo.	month
nec.	necessary (must have)
op., oper.	operate or operator
pd.	paid
p.m.	afternoon or evening
pref.	prefer
pt.	part or part-time
refs.	references
req.	required
sal.	salary
secy.	secretary
sh.	shorthand
sr.	senior
temp.	temporary
trnee.	trainee (beginner)
typ.	typing or typist
U-W	underwriter (insurance salesperson)
wk.	week or work
wkr.	worker
wpm.	words per minute
yr.	year

3. Want ads generally contain:

   a. Name of position: Service Station Attendant, Retail Sales Clerk, Bus Driver, etc.

   b. Whether the job is full- or part-time, and for some jobs, the shift, for example, 11-7 shift. Sometimes whether the job is temporary or permanent is also mentioned.

   c. Where to write, phone, or go for an interview.

   Job notices usually contain a statement about the qualifications needed. In a want ad, this may be shortened or left out.

4. You should read the qualifications for any job carefully, but you should know that very few employers stick closely to those qualifications when hiring unless they have a specific person in mind and have tailored the job qualifications to fit only that person.

   a. Well-written qualifications sections are flexible, and they reflect the job. They use phrases like "Required: H.S. degree or equivalent," "B.A. in marketing or equivalent experience required," or "Experience in journalism or related field." Terms like "equivalent experience" are usually not explained. What they usually mean is that if the person hiring you likes you and thinks you can do the job, he or she will decide you have the "equivalent experience" required. Of course, you must know how to present yourself as someone who can do the job.

   Well-written qualifications sections leave room for the great variety of people from different backgrounds who could do the job. They don't exclude people on the basis of non-merit factors, things about them that don't have anything to do with how good a job they would do, such as sex, age, race, or marital status.

   b. Badly written qualifications sections contain education and experience requirements which are too specific for the job and tougher than they need to be. Sometimes they are racist or sexist, but this is not always clear on the surface. Be suspicious and learn to read between the lines.

Here are some examples of poorly written job notices that exclude people unfairly:

Example 1

> *Experienced Chef wanted to plan and prepare three meals a day at Pi Iota Gamma Fraternity, full-time position during school year. Gd. pay. Applicants must be past or present members of a university fraternity. Call 357-9928 for information.*

Why is this ad discriminatory? Whether a chef has been a member of a university fraternity does not affect how well he or she prepares meals. In this case, it did affect the kinds of people who were asked to apply. Only men could belong to fraternities, and at that school, only whites had ever been asked to join a fraternity.

There were several experienced chefs in the area who were non-white or female, or both. One of them complained to the school and threatened to take the matter to the State Human Rights Commission. The fraternity was forced to delete the ad requirement that applicants be fraternity members.

Example 2

Dept. Manager wanted full-time for toy dept. at Brumble's Family Store. Person must have had prior experience running recreational programs for children. Should also have taken courses in personnel management and accounting. Immediate employment. "An equal opportunity employer."

Why is this ad unfair? This looks very much like a position that's already been promised to someone else. Why should prior experience running recreational programs be a requirement, unless the store is running special children's play programs? (As it happens, it isn't.) Why shouldn't equivalent experience in personnel management and accounting be enough?

Example 3

WANTED, person to do community relations work for Exitrex Seed Corporation. Required: B.A. in Journalism, good references. Exc. salary. Job starts Sept. 6, 1982. "An equal opportunity employer."

Is the educational requirement higher than it needs to be? Experience in doing publicity and in dealing with farmers' organizations perhaps, but a B.A. in a field as specific as journalism? The ad should at least say "or equivalent experience." This employer doesn't really know what's involved. Any bright applicant would find out what a community relations person does and tell the employer what the real requirements should be, and then how she or he fits them, based on past experience. Many employers ask for a college degree when what they really want is a person who is a go-getter and fairly intelligent. Neither of these qualities is necessarily tied to a degree. It's a good idea to find out what the real requirements are. Remember, too, that educational requirements that are higher than they need be discriminate against people who can do the job but don't have the degree. They are especially unfair to groups which historically have not had access to higher education.

Learn to be critical. Assume that phrases like "college degree required" also mean "or equivalent experience." If, after researching the job, you feel you do have the experience to do it even though you don't have a college

degree, you should apply. In both your resume and your interview, you should be extra careful to let the employer know that you know what the job involves and you've got what it takes.

Chapter 2-The Whole Person Resume/ Job Applications

OBJECTIVE: To write a resume for yourself and learn the proper way to fill out job applications.

RESUMES

Near the end of this chapter you will find two sample resumes (pages 136-139). There are several different types of resumes, but all contain certain information in common:

1. Name, address, and telephone number of person seeking employment.
2. The kind of job the person wants (this is often called the Objective or Job Objective).
3. Amount of education and from which school(s).
4. Listing of past jobs and volunteer activity, plus what the person did in those jobs.
5. Other interests and experiences.
6. References.

As you look at resumes, ask yourself:

1. What is the same about all of them?
2. What things are different?
3. How did these women use their life experiences to their advantage?
4. How did these women use volunteer experience in their resumes?

Now you'll learn how to write your own resume. Throughout this section, you should keep looking at the model resumes for ideas.

Exercise:

Take a few pieces of blank paper. Write quickly, following these steps:

STEP 1: *Heading (Name, Address, and Telephone Number)*

See the sample resumes for the way to do this. Always put your own name without Mrs., Miss, or Ms. in front of it.

STEP 2: *Job Objective*

Fill in your present job objective from "Setting Goals for Your Career," page 113. If you are willing to move to another town, county, or state, write "willing to relocate" at the end of your job objective. The reasons for this are, first, sometimes you will have to move to another place to get the best job; and second, some employers discriminate against women, using the excuse that they are too tied to their homes or immediate locales. Don't write "willing to relocate" if you have a good reason not to move.

STEP 3: *Experience, Aptitudes, and Work Characteristics*

There are several ways to complete this part of your resume. Traditional resumes usually list your past education and jobs, brief descriptions of what you did in each job, and a person (or persons) to call as reference (see samples).

A functional resume, on the other hand, picks out characteristics and skills that match a person's job objective. Then for each trait or skill, it shows how the person measures up. This is the type of resume you will learn to write with this exercise.

Example:

Janine Sorensen's resume says this:

> *Objective: A part-time job in sales or rental of farm equipment or hardware. Have car and am willing to work anywhere within a 30-mile radius of Springfield, Ohio.*

Now ask yourself, if you were an employer, what skills would you expect in someone looking for a job in sales of farm equipment? Here are the skills and traits Janine talks about in her resume. She makes each of them into a subheading on her resume.

Ability to sell products
Ability to work with people
Experience in farming
Ability to work hard
Experience with tools and machinery
Professionalism
Dependability, conscientiousness, and honesty

These skills would be different for each job objective and each person, though some traits, like dependability, would be useful in any job. In a functional resume, these skills and abilities would be your subheadings. Now write down six skills that relate to your job objective. If you run out of ideas, look over what you found out about yourself in "Knowing Your Skills," pages 95-96. Or look back again at pages 113-118, "Setting Goals for Your Career," to see

what skills are important for the job. Finally, put yourself in the place of the consumer and the employer. Ask yourself what a client, customer, or supervisor would expect of someone in this job.

When you've invented some functional subheadings, write down for each one the things you've done that prove you have that skill or ability. Follow the format in the sample functional resume at the end of the chapter. Include all the following information:

EDUCATION: Mention by name any high school or college courses that relate to your objective in which you got an average or better grade (that is, a "C" or better).

JOB EXPERIENCE: Talk specifically about the skills you brought to or developed on the job. It's often a good idea to describe jobs in terms of your daily activity (one or two sentences); then give your major achievement for the job.

Here are some examples of ways you might present some traditional women's jobs. The underlined parts are resume headings. The other phrases might be used to explain the headings. Don't assume that because you've always worked in one sort of job that you need to stay in the same job. Maybe your abilities add up to other jobs that pay more and are more interesting.

Domestic Service: Hardworking, low absenteeism, good references; Works Well with People, good at calming angry patrons, familiar with how a hotel works, likes to solve problems for people, Honest, Conscientious Worker, Dependable, Performs Well under Stress, Exacting.

Clerical Worker: Good at organizing an office, Experienced at Travel Arrangements, pleasant to work with, friendly, low absenteeism, high (or consistently improving) typing speed, learns quickly, experienced filer, experienced in... (add the area the office specializes in--law, business, service agency, etc.), Good at Dealing with People, Painstaking, Task-Oriented, Takes Initiative, Efficient. (Be sure to put down in your resume if you were doing any especially demanding work over and above the usual tasks of a clerical worker, for example, preparing very technical or very specialized correspondence, arranging a specialized library, doing accounting, putting together a newsletter, or doing any jobs generally assigned to "professional" staff. You should mention these even though you may never have been paid for them.)

Waitress: Fast, energetic worker, Excellent Memory, experience dealing constructively with customer complaints, likes to meet new people, Courteous and Helpful, In Good Physical Condition, Works Well with People.

Assembly Line Work/Cannery: Fast, safe, energetic worker, Good at Working with Hands, out sick only one day in three months, Learns Quickly, Good with Machines, Dependable.

Homemaker/Mother: Good Organizer, manages a household of seven people, plans and cooks meals, organizes social occasions for up to twenty-five people, keeps household accounts, budgets, Effective at Delegating Responsibility, Effective at Managing Time, Experienced at Working with Children, Performs Well under Stress, Goal-Oriented.

Cashier: Quick, helpful, Dependable, attentive, Honest, and Accurate; Accustomed to Working with Numbers, Accustomed to Dealing with the Public.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: These are very important, and too often left out of people's resumes. Be certain to mention and describe any volunteer activity related to your objective. Also mention volunteer activities that demonstrate general work skills, such as Works Well with People, Creative Approach to Problem Solving, Management Skills, Leadership, etc.

There is a growing tendency to give volunteer work its due as an activity in which people learn marketable skills. For example, the federal government can no longer give paid work more weight than unpaid work in awarding jobs if the work done was the same in both. This trend could add up to a big plus for women who have not taken a paying job outside the home or who have taken relatively low-paying jobs because of homemaking and child-rearing responsibilities, but who have been active in volunteer activities.

Volunteer activities could include work with religious or ethnic associations, social organizations, charitable groups, political groups, chambers of commerce, parent committees, tenant groups, farmers' organizations, unions, and a variety of others. Also included are any clubs you ever belonged to in high school, like 4-H, Future Farmers of America, musical groups, the French Club, etc.

The skills you could get from or demonstrate in volunteer activities are almost endless. A few skills and characteristics often mentioned are:

Leadership Ability - if you have ever been made an officer of any group, or if you've started any group of your own.

Management/Coordination Skills - if you've ever organized a convention, church socials, meetings, a political campaign, etc.

Experienced Budget Manager - if you've ever been a treasurer for any organization, or kept accounts, or had anything to do with giving out money.

Successful Fund Raiser - if you've ever run lotteries, bake sales, fund-raising dinners or parties; written or helped write grant proposals; hosted site visits; persuaded people to contribute to any cause, including a political one. These skills might also be mentioned under the heading Good Sales Ability.

Sensitivity to Other People - if you've ever done peer counseling, been involved in Alcoholics Anonymous or Al-Anon, done crisis counseling, volunteered in a hospital or nursing home, etc.

Task-Oriented or Creative Approach to Problem Solving - if you can think of some problem you've dealt with in an organization, such as making peace between opposing sides, solving a budget problem, setting group priorities, putting out a newsletter, etc.

Sales Ability - if you've ever been involved in persuading people to do something, for example, give money to a political campaign or blood to a blood drive.

Public Relations - if you've ever put out a newsletter, done recruitment, or had anything to do with publicizing an issue.

Learning or Practicing a Particular Skill - if you've been involved with French clubs, needlework groups, 4-H clubs, helping with Scout groups, etc.

Anyone who has been a part of a volunteer organization can probably think of more headings.

OTHER ACTIVITIES: This could include almost anything and may be very important, particularly if you are trying to get into a trade or blue-collar occupation, or establish yourself in something having to do with art or business. Turn back to the "Knowing Your Skills" chapter. Would one of those "things you're proud of having done in your life" fit in here?

Have you ever: Renovated or helped renovate a part of a house?
Used any hand tools or electrical tools?
Done minor repairs on your own car?
Done any carpentry? Plumbing? Electrical repair?
Done farm work, including driving farm equipment?
Worked with animals?
Won prizes in a state or county fair for anything you did?

Do you like working with your hands? Did someone in your family ever teach you to use tools? These are important things to mention if you are ever trying to get into an apprenticeship or training program. You might put them under headings such as Experienced in Maintenance, Like Working with My Hands, Experienced with Machines, or Experienced with Farm Equipment, etc.

Have you ever: Done painting, crafts, sewing, or other activities in your home?
Run a small business out of your home?
Sold Avon or Tupperware products?

These may be useful under headings like Work in the Arts, Self-Motivated, Experienced in Budgeting, Experienced Salesperson, and others.

Do you: Play any kind of sports, especially team sports like basketball or softball?
Take long hikes?
Jog?
Consider yourself physically fit now?

This information is also important for women trying to get into apprenticeship programs. The apprenticeship committees want to know that you can do the job, and they may assume that just because you're a woman you're not physically fit. Let them know the real score. Describe sports or other physical activities (for instance, if you walk several miles a day and are used to lifting heavy objects) under the heading of Physically Fit. You can also list sports activities under headings such as Self-Disciplined or Works Well as Part of a Team.

You can see that your resume should reflect a lot more about you than just the jobs you've held and the number of years of school you've had. Your talents, skills, and interests show up in many different areas of your life. Let the person who is hiring know about these other skills. They may get you out of the rut of taking the same old jobs over and over.

STEP 4: *Personal Information*

Keep your personal information section small or leave it out altogether. The usual information is:

Date of birth - You are not required to give this information, and if you are worried about age discrimination (people not hiring you because they think you are either too young or too old), leave it out. If you do decide to put it in, it's generally better to put your date of birth rather than your age, for example, "Born April 17, 1940."

Marital status - You are not required to give this information, but if you want to, you may. Some people recommend writing only "married" or "single" because of discrimination against divorced or separated people. It is your own personal decision whether to put anything at all about marital status on your resume.

Number of dependents - Again, this information is not required. Many employers discriminate against women with children, so it's probably best not to mention them.

State of your health - If it is good, write "in good (or excellent health"; if it is not, your best bet is not to write anything.

Interests - An area in which to mention briefly other hobbies or interests you have that didn't fit anywhere else, for example, reading, playing chess, sewing, etc. Be sure to put down activities that either relate to the job or give a sense of you as a well-rounded person. Put down only a few, four at most.

STEP 5: *Additional References*

If you have written a functional resume, this is the place where you list past supervisors, along with addresses and contact phone numbers.

Example

Roxanne Seidenmacher, M.S.W.
Davis Family Health
Davis, Alabama 60037
Tel. (616) 322-3377

My supervisor during the time I was a health aide in the town of Davis.

You will already have explained what you did as a health aide under the Experience, Aptitudes, and Work Characteristics section (Step 3).

If you have written a traditional resume, you will already have put your supervisors' names, addresses, and contact numbers elsewhere in your resume. You can either leave the References section out or put in the names of other people who know you. References often list people who have taught you in the past, or people who have worked with you in a volunteer organization. Usually it's wise to explain briefly how a particular person knows you. Don't put the names of people down as references without letting them know you've done so. It's not generally a good idea just to put down the names of friends unless you can say you have worked with them in some capacity.

Example

Barbara Norris
P.O. Box 6630
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Tel. (907) 384-2009

We have co-authored several articles and worked together in a number of volunteer organizations over the last few years.

STEP 6: *The Finishing Touches*

1. Your finished resume should be typed very neatly. Have someone who you know is a good speller look it over before it is copied. Friends are useful earlier on in the process of writing a resume, also. They can give you valuable feedback on how you sound on paper.

2. Get copies offset printed or photocopied as neatly as possible. Get several dozen copies to start with, more if you are doing a full-scale job hunting campaign. When you change or revamp your resume, don't write in the changes--type a new resume.

3. If you are trying for a number of different types of careers, you can do one of several things:

   a. Write a resume for each career area, each with a different job objective. Parts of your resume will be similar for each kind of job, but will stress the things that make you particularly suited for that job.

   b. Write a resume with a more general job objective, for example:

      Objective: A job that allows me to work with people and uses my organizational skills, preferably one that involves working outside.

      This objective is general enough to cover several types of jobs. On the other hand, this one:

      Objective: A job as a Recreational Aide

      is pretty specific. That's all right if this is the only type of job you are looking for.

   c. Leave out the objective and say what your objective is in your cover letter.

4. Don't make your resume too long. In some parts of the country, employers won't read a resume longer than a page. Three pages is really pushing it unless you've got something really special to say, or the job you're applying for is very demanding. Try not to repeat anything, even if things you've done could come under several possible headings. Try to make your resume easy on the eyes. Don't crowd too much in.

5. Try to turn characteristics that might seem like drawbacks into advantages. For example:

   a. If you haven't held a paid job for a while, talk about the things you've learned from child rearing, home management, volunteer activity, or your husband's job. Don't say "unemployed"; say "homemaker and community volunteer."

b. If you're on welfare or unemployment compensation, talk about how good you are at budgeting and how you've taken advantage of training programs. There's no need to state that you've been (or are) on welfare or unemployment compensation. That is your business.

c. If you dropped out of school in tenth grade, but just got your GED certificate and are planning to take some college courses next semester, talk about how disciplined and self-directed you are and how good you are at overcoming obstacles.

WHAT NOT TO PUT ON YOUR RESUME

Things that are usually not put in resumes are specific statements about:

1. Your ethnic background. However, it is all right to mention organizations you belong to that are primarily associated with people of a certain ethnic background, for example, Alaska Native Sisterhood, Seattle Black Caucus, etc. You should mention these under headings other than Personal Information.

2. Your religious or political affiliations. Avoid statements such as "I am a Democrat" or "I am a Methodist," though these may be obvious from your volunteer activities.

3. Very personal details. Include these only if they had such a huge impact on you that they must be explained or if the experience made you particularly suited for the type of job in question--for example, you are applying for a job as an alcoholism counselor and you are a recovering alcoholic who has been sober for eight years. In that case, you would put that information not in the section called Personal Information, but in one called First-Hand Knowledge of Alcoholism or Personal Experience with Chemical Dependency.

SUMMARY

The main points to remember in writing a resume, whether it's a functional resume or another kind, are:

1. Make all parts of it relate to your job objective. Research what is expected of someone in the position you want. Then say what you have done that proves you fit the bill.

2. Use many different life experiences in writing your resume. Most people don't learn all they know from jobs they've held or from the formal education they've had. For many people, those are only a tiny part of their total collection of salable skills (skills that might be very useful in their next paid job). Remember to give yourself credit for the things you learned while running a home and/or raising children.

3. Arrange your resume in a clear way that's easy on the eyes. Make it very neat, with no misspellings. Resumes must be typed.

Example: Functional Resume

RESUME

Marla Kabokov
P.O. Box 717
Sitka, Alaska 97302

Telephone: (907) 583-0030

Wanted: A job as a Dietetic Aide. Am on the way to realizing a life-long ambition to become a registered dietician.

Summary of Background: Considerable experience with meal planning and food preparation as a homemaker, community volunteer, and working mother of seven children. Education: through tenth grade, Sheldon Jackson High School. Excellent grades in home economics and health. GED certificate, 1976. Have completed several workshops and correspondence courses in nutrition and health and home management.

Experience, Aptitudes, and Work Characteristics

Meal Planning and Nutrition: Twenty years of planning nutritious meals for a household of nine persons has given me an excellent background for this career. Through the Home Studies Correspondence Service, I have supplemented this experience with two college-level courses in Basic Principles of Nutrition and Biology, receiving above-average grades in both. This year, I took a University of Alaska extension course in planning nutritious meals on a small budget, and I have attended several workshops in home economics. I subscribe to Nutrition Magazine.

Food Preparation: Have held several part-time or seasonal positions as a cook or cook's assistant, notably at the Dewitt Logging Camp, where I cooked three meals a day for approximately 35 persons over a six-month period. Have also been a part-time kitchen worker at the Sitka Pioneers' Home and at a local restaurant, the Anchor. These jobs gave me exposure to modern, sanitary food preparation techniques. I am often called upon to plan and help prepare congregation dinners at my church, a recent high point being planning and preparing a sit-down dinner for 150 people at a statewide church convention.

Concern about Health: Have had a long-time association with the local Red Cross and have worked as a member of the Parent-Teacher Association to foster better health education in our schools. In 1970, was appointed to serve on a committee to investigate the quality of food services in our elementary schools.

Experience in Dealing with People: Managing a home and family and helping organize large church events have given me valuable experience in dealing with people. My work at Sitka Pioneers' Home and as a waitress at the Anchor restaurant in Sitka showed me that I also liked working with people, and enjoyed being a part of the team that made sure that all meals were tasty and healthful. This past year, I served as chairman of the social committee of Alaska Native Sisterhood, Camp No. 4.

Dependability in Following Orders: I am seldom absent from work and have developed good relationships with supervisors because of my ability to follow complex directions quickly and correctly.

Task Skills Qualifications: Basic menu planning, food purchasing, supervising food production.

Personal Information: Born May 1, 1939. In excellent health. With only two children left at home, I have a great deal of flexibility for career performance.

References:

Thelma Johnson Manager of Food Services Sitka Pioneers' Home	(907) 583-0047
Daniel Tucker Manager Dewitt Logging Camp	(907) 787-2223
Susan Stiles Owner and Manager Anchor Restaurant	(907) 583-3320

Example: Traditional Resume

RESUME

Dianne C. Peck
P.O. Box 77
Kake, Alaska 99801

Telephone: (907) 583-0200

Objective

A full-time job in sales of marine hardware and boats. Have car, and am looking primarily in the Kake-Klawock area, but would consider relocating.

Education

Graduated 1968, Mt. Edgecumbe High School, Sitka, Alaska
Coast Guard Auxiliary School and Certification
Attended Juneau-Douglas Community College - Small Boat Engine Repair

Work Experience

JIM'S MARINE SUPPLY
P.O. BOX 77
KAKE, ALASKA
(907) 334-7279
MANAGER/OWNER - JAMES McCULSKEY

STOCK CLERK
SEPTEMBER 1977-PRESENT

In my present job I do inventories and help order and keep the stockroom in shape. I also unload boxes and do parts assembling. I wait on customers and am often called upon to explain new equipment or to solve minor equipment problems. I keep up-to-date on fishing and boating supplies. This job is ending on June 2, 1982, because the owner is retiring.

VARIOUS BOAT OWNERS
IN KAKE, KLAWOCK, AND SITKA AREAS

REPAIRING BOATS
JUNE 1975-PRESENT

I scrape, paint, and patch small boats; repair small-boat engines; and do some carpentry work on a free-lance basis. I am a fast and efficient worker and have helped boat owners save money by ordering and assembling parts rather than buying already assembled equipment. I am a self-directed worker and have had a fairly steady amount of work in this area over the last few years.

BEHRENDS DEPARTMENT STORE
213 3RD STREET
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
(907) 586-1006
SUPERVISOR - JUNE SIMPSON

CASHIER/SALES CLERK
JUNE 1970-SEPTEMBER 1970

This was a summer job. I did my work well, was helpful and dependable, and was seldom absent from work. I was fast and accurate on the cash register, and gained a great deal of experience in waiting on customers.

CALVIN PECK
P.O. BOX 63
KAKE, ALASKA 99830

CREW MEMBER
COMMERCIAL FISHING BOAT
1962-1976

Since the age of ten, I have often worked as a crew member on my parents' fishing boat. I cooked meals, cleaned fish, gill-netted, did bottom fishing, and repaired equipment and machinery. This gave me firsthand knowledge of boats and fishing that is extremely useful for any job having to do with marine hardware.

Volunteer Activities

Coast Guard Auxiliary - helping inspect small boats for Coast Guard Safety Inspection exam. Volunteer instructor at local high school in canoeing and sailing. I am an excellent navigator and enjoy teaching proper boating procedures.

Other Interests

I design and make vests and cushions for sale.

Other References

James Hunt P.O. Box 16 Sitka, Alaska	Have helped with boat and home repairs on several occasions. Mr. Hunt taught me a lot about carpentry.
Beatrice Shabach P.O. Box 73 Kake, Alaska	Long-time friend. Have done maintenance work on her boat.
Harry Sand P.O. Box 991 Sitka, Alaska	Taught me shop at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, 1967-68

JOB APPLICATIONS

After you have written a resume, it is much easier to fill in job application forms. Here are some pointers:

1. Fill out the application very neatly in ink or on a typewriter. If you need to cross something out, do so with one line only.

2. As with a resume, it's not enough just to list the jobs you've had. You have to say what you did in them, that is, list your skills. Again, list both day-to-day duties and your major achievements. Try to make your skills match the job you're applying for.

3. Put volunteer experiences in just as if they were paid jobs. Include references (someone who supervised your activities is best) and a description of your duties and major achievements.

4. It's often a good idea to bring with you a job application form that's already filled out. This will speed up filling out the second application, as you can often just copy from the first. Job application forms are all pretty similar. Be quick in filling out your application. If you take too long, the employer may think you're a slow worker.

5. Fill in all spaces. If you have nothing to put in a particular space, put N.A. (not applicable). Otherwise, the person reading the application will wonder if you just passed over the question by mistake.

6. Sometimes questions like these appear on applications:

   Were you ever convicted of a felony?

   Have you ever been fired from a job?

   If you have been convicted of a felony or fired from a job, you have three choices:

   a. Tell the truth and risk not getting an interview.

   b. Lie, which would be grounds for being fired if the truth ever got out, but might bring only a reprimand if you had by that time shown yourself to be doing a good job.

   c. Write "Will explain in interview" in the space, and do your best to sell yourself as a decent, hardworking, basically honest person in the interview. It's a lot easier to do this in an interview than on a piece of paper.

7. Some questions may be illegal for the employer to ask at any point in the job-seeking process, including the job application. For further information on this, see Chapter 4, "The Interview."

RESOURCES

Brennan, L. D.; Strand, S.; and Gruber, E. C. Resumes for Better Jobs. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973; about $2.95.

Strohmeyer, C. T. How to Complete Job Application Forms.

Available from APGA Publications Sales, 1607 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009; $0.75.

Taylor, Phoebe. How to Succeed in the Business of Finding a Job. Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1977; about $4.95.

Covers all aspects of job hunting and contains excellent sections on resumes and interviews.

(See also the Resources section at the end of Chapter 4, "The Interview.")

Chapter 3- How To Write A Cover Letter

OBJECTIVE: To practice finding the names and addresses of prospective employers and writing cover letters.

It is good practice to enclose or attach a cover letter whenever you send your resume to anyone. The purpose of the cover letter is:

1. To make personal contact with an employer. You use the same resume over and over, but cover letters are all different. Your cover letter should name the company or agency you'd like to work for. If possible, the letter should be addressed to a particular person in the company. The best person to address it to in a small company or agency is the Director or Manager. In a larger company, address the letter to the head of the department you are interested in. Don't address your letter to the director of personnel unless you want a job in personnel work. Directors of personnel are not involved in hiring except in their own department, and they are likely to discard your resume if it relates to some other type of job. Always try to get your letter to the person who would be hiring you.

   On the envelope, type "Attention: (the person's name and title in the organization)" rather than the person's name alone. This is to cover yourself in case this individual has left the company or agency. If you put, "Attention: James Scoby, Head, Civil Engineering Division" and James Scoby has left the job, the letter will probably be opened by the person who took over his job, which is exactly what you want. Otherwise, it may get forwarded to Mr. Scoby, which wouldn't help you much.

2. To mention any special qualifications you have that make you uniquely fitted to work for this particular employer. These may be things you didn't put in your resume because they were too specialized.

3. To express your interest in this particular job and this particular company or agency. The more you know about the company, the better. This is the place to show what you know.

4. To request an interview. This is your main reason for sending out a resume, since no one actually hires you until after having talked with you. The purpose of your resume and cover letter is to raise enough interest in you so you'll be asked for an interview.

Task 1:

Get the names and addresses of three businesses or agencies that hire people for the kind of job that interests you. You may already know some names, and will only need to check on the mailing addresses and find a personal contact.

If you don't know any names right off, here are some places to look:

The Telephone Directory - especially the yellow pages. The phone book is also an excellent place to look for job ideas, and to get a sense of the employment outlook in your area. Once you have an organization's phone number, you can call up and ask the name of the director or department head who handles the kind of job you want.

Dun and Bradstreet Reference Book - found in any library or placement service. It lists corporations and their addresses by state.

State Government Directory, Federal Telephone Directory, or Congressional Directory - for any government jobs.

Poor's Register of Directors and Executives - another place where you may find the name of your personal contact.

Your Local Chamber of Commerce - usually has names, addresses, and personal contacts for all local businesses. Also often has a small library.

The workshop coordinator will demonstrate how to find three addresses that correspond to jobs in a particular field.

Now find three addresses yourself. Ask questions if you can't think of where to start.

My chosen job is _____

Three addresses are: 1. _____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

Task 2:

Now quickly write a cover letter to go with a resume to one of these people whose names and addresses you have found. If you want, just use the models and fill in the new name, address, type of experience, and type of job. See the next few pages for samples of cover letters, and don't forget to include:

1. Your return address
2. The address of the people you're writing to
3. The kind of job you're looking for
4. A brief summary of your experience or your good qualities as a worker
5. Mention of your resume
6. A request for an interview, including, if you wish, a statement that you will be following up your letter with a phone call

Note: Cover letters, like resumes, should be neat, with no misspellings. A resume must always be typed. A cover letter should be typed, if that is at all possible.

Example

Return address

P.O. Box 17
Cabin Creek, West Virginia 33001

Date

October 23, 1981

Melissa was unable to get the name of the sales manager. "Greetings" is a good opener when you don't know whom you're addressing. Another is "To Whom It May Concern." Don't use "Dear Sir" or "Gentlemen," since the person or persons you are writing to may well be women.

Nuway Department Store
1337 Main Street
Charleston, West Virginia 33010

Attention: Sales Manager

Greetings:

I understand your store has an opening for a sales clerk in the furniture department. I am an experienced salesperson who can supply good references, and I would like to be considered for the job. Enclosed is a resume describing my qualifications. I am willing to relocate in Charleston on very short notice.

Mentions specific job opening

Mentions resume

Willing to move to Charleston

I would like very much to talk with you about this position. Would you call me at 534-2131 to arrange a time that is convenient for you?

Request for interview

Contact number

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Melissa Springer

Melissa Springer

Example

Return address

P.O. Box 379
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Date

November 18, 1981

Diana called the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Agency and asked the secretary who the director was and how his name was spelled.

Diana looked in the yellow pages of the Anchorage phone book under Alcohol Treatment and sent a resume and cover letter to each agency listed there.

Attention:

Mr. J. L. Anukiuk
Director
Anchorage Alcoholism Center
370 Denali Street
Anchorage, Alaska 95003

Personal contact

Dear Mr. Anukiuk:

I recently moved to Anchorage after two years with the Alcoholism Central Agency in Tucson, Arizona, and I am now seeking a job as an outreach worker. In Arizona I did educational work with, and outreach to, a number of different groups, including women, teenagers, and migrant workers. Because of these experiences and others detailed in the enclosed resume, I am interested in learning more about the new program on alcoholism education for high school students currently being developed at the Anchorage Alcoholism Center.

Mentions kind of job she's looking for.

Summary of experience

Shows she knows something about the agency she's interested in.

I would like very much to have an opportunity to speak to you about possible employment with the Alcoholism Center. May I give you a call next week to arrange a time to see you? Thanks in advance for your time.

Asks for an interview

Lets him know she'll follow up letter with a call.

Sincerely,

Diana Tinovsky

Diana Tinovsky

Example

Return address	137 Milk Street Ridge, Wisconsin 73203
Date	September 2, 1981

Attention:

Dr. Maria Jimenez
Director, Hearthway Veterinary Hospital
Hearthway, Wisconsin 73201

Personal contact

Dear Dr. Jimenez:

I am seeking a position as an animal caretaker and wonder if you have any openings. I enclose a resume detailing my experience and qualifications.

Mentions looking for a position and mentions resume.

I would like very much to meet with you to discuss a possible position with Hearthway Veterinary Hospital. May I call you next week to arrange a time?

Request for interview

Mentions that she'll follow up letter with a call.

Sincerely,

Susanna Sorenson

Susanna Sorenson

Chapter 4 - The Interview

OBJECTIVE: To learn about interviews and practice interviewing skills.

The interview is what gets you the job. It is the moment the job seeker worries about the most, but it can also be the most enjoyable part of looking for a job. Interviewing well is a skill that comes with practice.

The most important think about your interviewing style is not your job experience or level of education, but how well you present yourself. When people interview you, they want to know whether they can work with you comfortably.

WHAT IMPRESSES INTERVIEWERS

1. People who dress comfortably but well, and in a way that is appropriate to the job they're applying for.

2. People who seem to think well of themselves. Confidence implies competence.

3. People who are friendly and who have a sense of humor, but who aren't too informal.

4. People who seem to know something about the company or agency and about the job (that is, people who have researched well), and who seem enthusiastic about the job.

A FEW DON'TS

1. Don't chew gum or smoke.

2. Don't talk about your bad points unless you are very confident of your good points. What seems to you like a truthful statement about your faults may sound to a potential employer as if you are putting yourself down. If you are asked what your weakest point is, mention something that could also be a good point.

   Example

   "Well, I'm sometimes impatient with people who aren't working at their full potential." Another way to answer the question is, "I can't think of anything that would pose a problem for this job."

3. Don't ever talk about personal problems in an interview. Potential employers feel very uncomfortable when they think they're being

used as counselors or confessors. Also, they're reluctant to hire people who look as if they are going to be preoccupied with things other than work. The main thing they're interested in is seeing that the job gets done by someone with whom they feel comfortable.

4. Don't ever say bad things about any past employers, regardless of how you may feel about them. If asked about a job from which you were fired or which you quit, say something like, "My former supervisor and I disagreed about procedure. He was my supervisor and I respect his opinion, but I didn't feel it was either in his best interest or mine for me to stay."

OTHER TIPS

1. If you don't have as much education as some other people in this position, go out of your way to explain how your experience makes up for it.

2. Bring two copies of your resume with you to every interview, one for you in case you suddenly can't think of what to say, and one for the person interviewing you in case she or he has lost or misplaced your first resume. If you've already filled out a job application, hand the interviewer your resume anyway. The resume is likely to be more informative and more interesting.

3. Don't worry if you're a little nervous at first; interviewers expect that.

4. Ask your interviewer some questions about the position or about the organization as a whole. Good questions show you know what's going on. Think up your questions before you go into the interview. Bring a copy of the position description or job advertisement with you if there is one, and show that you have read it carefully.

5. Before the interview, write down all the questions you think will be asked and practice how you would respond to them. Some common questions:

   a. Will you tell us a little about yourself? (You respond with a short statement about your background and experience and a recap of your job objectives.)

   b. What is your experience in this type of work?

   c. Why are you interested in this particular job?

   d. What are your long-range goals? Where do you see yourself five years from now?

   e. What are your main selling points?

f. What are the main characteristics you think a job like this would require?

g. Why did you leave your last job?

6. Work on your body language. Here are some pointers:

a. Don't slouch. If you sit up straight, you'll appear more confident.

b. Don't stare at the interviewer(s), but do establish eye contact every so often. If there are several interviewers, establish eye contact with all of them.

c. Don't stare down at the table or at your hands; keep your head up. Don't put your hands in front of your face.

d. Don't fidget or giggle.

After an interview it's often a good idea to sit down for a few minutes and think: What did I do well in that interview? What did I do not so well and how can I improve next time? The more interviewing you do, the better you will become at it.

DEALING WITH PROBLEM QUESTIONS*

Federal law does not expressly forbid interviewers to ask you questions about your race, color, religion, or national origin. However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regards such inquiries with extreme disfavor. Suppose the person interviewing you asks you a direct question about one of these things, or he or she tries by an indirect method to find out your race, color, religion, or national origin and then does not hire you. That may be enough basis for a charge of illegal discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Questions about race, color, religion, or national origin can be asked in an interview or on an application if it is for the purpose of affirmative action. If this is so, the interviewer or the application form should state that that is why the question is being asked.

It is also illegal to discriminate on the basis of physical handicap. Generally, an employer may ask you whether or not you can perform a task that the particular job you are being interviewed for requires. For example, "This job occasionally requires that you lift up to 70 pounds. Could you do that?" would be an acceptable question. It is not acceptable to ask,

---

*The information for this section comes primarily from Labor Law Reports: Employment Practices (Chicago: Commerce Clearing House, updated to 1979), pp. 761-767.

"Are you handicapped?" Discrimination against the handicapped is covered under Title V of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

State laws and local ordinances are often more comprehensive than federal laws. Often they make it illegal for employers to ask questions about race, color, religion, or national origin except for the purpose of affirmative action. In addition (depending on the state, county, or municipality), they may also forbid discrimination on the basis of, and sometimes inquiries about, a number of other "nonmerit" factors (that is, things that do not affect how well you would do a job).*

Depending on what state, county, or municipality you are in, it may be illegal to discriminate in employment on the basis of:

1. Marital status. You are also protected by federal law if the employer is making distinctions between women and men, for example, hiring married or unmarried men, but hiring only unmarried women.

2. Whether you have dependents or are a parent.

3. Sex. Discrimination in employment on the basis of sex is forbidden by federal Title VII for organizations with fifteen or more employees and for all unions and employment agencies. State fair-employment laws sometimes extend this to all employers.

4. Changes in marital status, i.e., divorce or separation.

5. Whether you are pregnant. Discrimination in employment against pregnant women is also considered a violation of federal Title VII.

6. Age. The federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 forbids discrimination in employment against persons aged 40 to 65. Some state laws are more comprehensive and cover discrimination against younger workers, say, those between 18 and 30, as well.

7. Sexual preference.

8. Credit or financial history.

9. Spouse's occupation.

10. Other nonmerit factors that vary from place to place.

In general, be suspicious about any personal questions, either in an interview or on an application form, that don't seem to bear any relation to the job to be performed. Before you look for a job, it might be a good idea to

---

*For further information on this, see 1975 Handbook on Women Workers, Bulletin 297 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Employment Standards Administration, 1975), pp. 323-325 and 339-340.

check your state, county, or city laws on employment discrimination. Often employment agencies, libraries, women's centers, the Human Rights Commission, or your state's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission office will have easy-to-read pamphlets on your employment rights.

What do you do if you're asked an inappropriate or nonmerit question? Obviously, you're faced with a problem. Basically, you have two choices:

1. Answer the question.

2. Refuse to answer the question.

In either case, if you are not hired, you have a right to complain if you feel that your response (or lack of response) caused the employer to discriminate against you.

If the question is a nonmerit personal question, but you feel your answer would not prejudice the employer against you, then your best course of action might be just to answer it. Be very careful, though. Unfair discrimination occurs against:

1. Women who are divorced or separated, a holdover from old ideas about divorced women.

2. Women with children, especially single women with children, either because the employer believes that women should stay home and take care of the children or because he or she thinks women with children will have a higher absentee rate.

3. Women who are married, because the employer thinks they will leave the job to follow their husbands.

4. Women who are single, because they might get married and leave.

5. Older women, because they are thought to be beyond their productive years and/or close to retirement.

6. Women who are pregnant, because employers think they might stop working when they have their babies and/or be sick often.

The point is, it's very hard to be sure what prejudices and stereotypes will come into play when you answer a question in any of these areas.

Another course of action is to stand on principle and refuse to answer any seemingly nonmerit questions until you're sure that they have a bearing on the job. There's no reason to do this in a defensive or aggressive way. Be pleasant, but firm.

Example

> *"We have a really friendly office here; my wife and I do a lot of socializing with the other folks in the office and their wives (a few husbands, too). By the way, you're not a divorcee, are you?"*

If you still want to work in the organization after a question like that, but you don't feel your marital status is the interviewer's business, what would you say? Here is one suggested answer:

> *"Sorry, but I make it a practice not to answer questions that don't relate to how well I do my job. I'm sure you'll agree that that's a more professional way to conduct business. I have always enjoyed socializing with my co-workers, if that's what you're asking."*

This may be a bit rude, but then, the question was inexcusable and would be grounds in many places for lodging a complaint of employment discrimination if the interviewer didn't hire you.

Usually, nonmerit questions are not put this rudely; in fact, they're often quite subtle.

Example

> *"What sort of accent is that?"* (to find out your background)
>
> *"Have you ever gone by any other name?"* (to find out if you're married)
>
> *"Are you living by yourself?"* (to find out about your marital status, sexual preference, or life-style)

Often when a prospective employer asks a nonmerit question, he or she is really trying to find out some other information. For example, "Do you have school-age children?" may really mean, "Are you going to be away from work every time one of your children gets sick?" One way of answering nonmerit questions is to answer the "hidden question."

Example (in answer to a question on whether you have school-age children)

> *"Why do you ask? In my last job I had an almost perfect attendance record."*

Often if the hidden question is answered, the person interviewing you will not pursue the original question. A good response to almost any personal question of this type is, "Why do you ask?" This gives you time to think of an answer and it might also clue you in to what the employer really wants to know.

How would you respond to a nonmerit question like:

"You're not pregnant, are you?"_____

_____

_____

_____

Exercise:

Three class members volunteer to be interviewers. The workshop coordinator leaves the room and the entire class thinks up some interview questions to ask her. When she comes back, the "employers" interview her for a specific position that has been previously decided upon. The workshop coordinator as interviewee should supply a resume, if possible.

Class members then alternate being interviewed and being on an interview panel. Women being interviewed should use resumes, if possible, and they should present real experiences they have had. The positions they are being interviewed for should be ones they are really interested in. After each interview, the class should discuss how well interviewees and interviewers presented themselves and make suggestions for improvement.

RESOURCES

Bolles, Richard. What Color Is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job Hunters and Career Changes. Berkeley, Calif.: Ten Speed Press, 1976; about $4.95.

An eccentric, but useful, guide to job seeking. Includes information on job notices, resumes, interviewing, and other areas.

Irish, Richard K. Go Hire Yourself an Employer. New York: Anchor Press, 1978; about $3.95.

An excellent, though occasionally irritating, book that just about everyone in career counseling uses. Chapters on resumes, interviewing, and working for the government. The section on the working woman is interesting, but should be taken with a grain of salt.

(See also the Resources section at the end of Chapter 2, "The Whole Person Resume/Job Applications.")

UNIT V-On The Job

Chapter 1 - Making A Good Impression And Having It Last

OBJECTIVE: To learn how to behave on the job so that you make a good impression.

There's a saying that if you get a reputation for being on time, you can come into work every day at 11 and no one will notice. The same thing holds true for other aspects of work. If you get a reputation early on for being bright, hardworking, or good at following directions, you will be way ahead for quite a while. Unfortunately, if you are a woman or a member of a minority group, often you not only have a reputation to build, you have one to overcome. This is a basic unfairness about the working world that anyone who is a part of it must learn to deal with. In their first few days on the job all new workers have to prove themselves; it's just that if you're a woman in a nontraditional job, or a minority person in just about any job, you often have to work twice as hard to prove yourself. Before you can start proving that you're hardworking, prompt, responsible, decisive or creative, you have to prove that you're not overemotional, weak, irrational, underqualified, lazy, and many other stereotypes. What this means in practice is that people watch you more closely. Whenever you make a mistake, people notice. If another person made the same mistake, no one would think twice about it. This can make working pretty stressful, especially when you're new on a job and trying to learn new tasks quickly.

TIPS FOR THE FIRST DAYS

1. Come into work a little bit early for at least the first week. After that, be right on time even if no one else is.

2. When you get directions for the first time, write down each step if there are any more than two. Most people can remember only two directions at time, so make things easier for yourself. Either keep all your directions in one notebook, or tape directions to the place where you do the actual work.

3. If you can, get a sample of the kinds of things you're supposed to do. Then copy the model whenever you have to do that job.

4. Remember that everyone makes mistakes at first, and most people keep making mistakes once in a while, however long they've been on the job. If you do make a mistake and you can't fix it quietly, ask for help in a dignified, positive way.

Example

"I believe I've done this wrong. Could I go over my directions with you again?"

or

"I'm a bit confused about this part. Could I get your advice?"

Never make negative, hopeless, or self-critical statements like:

"I've gotten this wrong again! I'm so dumb I'll never learn it!"
(If you say you're dumb, other people will start believing it.)

or

"I just don't think I'm cut out for this job!" (People will start thinking you aren't cut out for the job if you talk that way.)

THINGS THAT WILL HELP YOU KEEP YOUR JOB AND EARN YOU A GOOD RECOMMENDATION

1. Be on time almost all the time. Build a reputation for being that way.

2. Show respect for the people around you who have greater knowledge or experience than you, but don't put yourself down.

3. Follow directions carefully, writing things down if necessary. Try to foresee problems and ask about them before they come up. When you are given directions, repeat them to the person who gave them to make sure you got them right.

4. Be friendly, but don't spend a lot of time talking to your co-workers during working hours. Keep telephone calls very short.

5. Don't take breaks that are too long.

6. Take an interest in your job and be enthusiastic. Look for ways to do it better.

7. Don't spend a lot of time talking about family problems, and don't take off extra time to deal with personal things. The people you work with may be very sympathetic at first, but soon they will be criticizing you because you weren't at work when you were needed. Before you know it, you will get the reputation of being undependable. One common reason that people lose their jobs is that they seem to their superiors to be too involved in their personal troubles. Keep your personal life separate from your job.

8. If you have to quit your job, it is crucial that you give two weeks' notice. There is no excuse which will impress an employer enough ever to give a good recommendation to someone who left without the customary two weeks' warning. And remember, you will need that good recommendation when you look for another job.

Discussion:

Break up into small groups of about six people each and discuss the following:

1. Talk about problems you have had when starting out in a new job. Share some solutions you have found.

2. Do you think minorities and women have to work harder to be thought of as competent? Does this put more pressure on them than on other people?

3. What are some of the personal kinds of problems that can interfere with a job? What are some particular family problems that women, especially, tend to have? Are there any ways to solve these problems without having them interfere with work?

Chapter 2- Being Assertive On The Job

OBJECTIVE: To learn to be more assertive on the job. To get some tips on coping with discrimination in employment.

Eveline was hired to do sales checking, customer assistance, and display arranging. She works with several other employees and they are supposed to share the work. However, Eveline always seems to end up doing the sales checking and customer assistance work, which is less interesting, while the other two employees do the display arranging. Eveline worries about this. She thinks she would be good at display work if she had a little practice, and it doesn't seem fair for her always to do the boring chores.

Karen has a managerial position and she's got a lot of ideas on how to run the department better. Unfortunately, people don't seem to listen to her good ideas. Also, when she gives her opinion about things, some of her co-workers, who are male, go to others to get a second opinion, as if hers isn't good enough. She's already been passed over once for a promotion which a less qualified man got. Now she's just been passed over a second time.

Diane's boss always seems to be asking her to do extra jobs, stay through her lunch hour, do work he's supposed to do, get coffee, and so on. It's irritating, and she doesn't know how to stop it.

Arlene's supervisor has started pressuring her to have sex with him. She has heard that a previous employee of his was fired because she wouldn't go along with his demands, and she's worried about her job. She really wants to keep the job because it pays well and she is in line for a promotion. She doesn't know what to do.

Chris wants to go to a training course that would help her move out of her clerical position into a professional one. What should she do?

All of these are situations in which assertiveness would be helpful. Being assertive means being reasonable, yet firm. It doesn't mean that you insult people or make them so angry that they are totally turned off by you. Think about <u>being effective</u>.

Here are some things Eveline could do to try to get the work divided more fairly. Which do you think would work best?

1. Eveline accuses her co-workers of being racist and not giving her credit for her abilities. She demands that they let her do all the display arrangements. She also complains to the supervisor that they are putting her down and she thinks they should be fired.

2. Eveline sets up a time to talk with her two co-workers. She suggests that they divide the work more evenly and proposes a schedule of work.

3. Eveline doesn't say anything, but she gets more and more resentful and starts being rude to her co-workers.

Exercise:

Divide into small groups of about six people each. Review the chapter on assertiveness training (Unit I). In your group think up an assertive way to deal with each one of the problems on page 163. After about 20 minutes, each group should report back to the class and demonstrate an assertive speech or action.

MORE HINTS FOR ASSERTIVENESS

1. To make yourself sound more convincing, stop apologizing or asking for permission to say things. Women sometimes put themselves down just by the way they phrase their sentences.

   Example

   "Is it okay if I say a few words about this?" (Just say it.)

   "Gee, I'm sorry I don't sound very clear, but...." How do you know you're not clear?)

   "I'm not very good at this, but...." (Assume you're good, and other people will, too.)

   "I don't suppose my opinion means much, but...." (It certainly won't mean much after an opener like that.)

   "I'm going home now(?)" with your voice raised at the end as if to turn this statement into an unspoken question: *"Is it okay with you?"* (Say you're going home. It's after 5 p.m., isn't it?)

2. Always try to sound sure of yourself. If you sound indecisive or weak, people won't trust your opinions.

3. Talk loudly enough so everyone can hear. This shows people that you think your opinion is valuable. Women often tend to talk too softly.

4. When you are faced with put-downs or outright hostility, try humor. You'll win allies that way. It also shows you're more self-assured than the person who's putting you down.

Exercise:

Break up into small groups and make up some witty answers to the following put-downs:

1. "You're not one of those man-haters, are you?"

2. "Don't you worry your little head about that."

3. "You don't look as if you could lift anything that heavy."

4. "What's a pretty girl like you doing in a place like this?" (This questions a woman's having a position of so much authority.)

4. "You only got the job because you're a woman (or Indian or Hispanic or Black)."

GETTING A PROMOTION

Management people in many organizations typecast women as people who aren't interested in promotions. They can tell you a dozen reasons why women would rather stay right where they are, which happens to be in low-paying, low-challenge, dead-end jobs. Most of these excuses are not based on reality, but they still work to create an attitude barrier that women must get past.

The very first step toward getting a promotion is to let it be known that you're looking for one. This means telling your boss, the personnel officer (if one exists), and anyone who is involved in affirmative action, trainee, or upward mobility programs that you are interested in trying for a more challenging position. If you want to move out of a relatively low-paid, unskilled, or dead-end job into a nontraditional, technical, or professional job, it is particularly important to investigate affirmative action, trainee, or upward mobility programs in your organization. This means getting to know the people who are supposed to be running them.

Try to get a reputation for being a go-getter, someone who likes challenges, and who would stick with a training program or a higher-level job. More and more organizations are now being brought to task by the government for not encouraging the promotion of women or minorities. A common complaint made by organizations is, "We can't find any women or minorities who are interested." It is the responsibility of the person hiring to make sure that women and minorities, including those working within the organization, find out about job openings, but these people don't always do a very good job of it. That is why it's so important for you to take some initiative.

Once you've definitely decided you want a promotion, start taking advantage of any free career counseling you can find. Consider taking a lateral transfer within your organization, if there is another job at your same level which seems to have more possibility for advancement. If you have mastered your present job, be assertive and ask for some more challenging tasks. Sometimes it's even possible to upgrade the position you're in, just on the basis of the extra tasks you have taken on.

Find yourself a mentor. A mentor is someone higher up in the organization who can give you support and show you the ropes. The mentor system is actually very old; it's how many men have arrived where they are now. It's only recently that women have also started looking for mentors and acting as mentors to other people. Your mentor doesn't necessarily have to be another woman; often it's hard to find many women in upper-level positions. It is important that your mentor be someone who is supportive and interested in your welfare. It is also important that he or she have something to teach you.

While you're moving up the career ladder, don't forget to look out for the welfare of others. Being assertive doesn't mean stepping over other women in a rush to the top. Women are reaching positions of power now in large part because of the collective actions of thousands of other women who went before them, and no one moves up solely because of her or his own individual initiative, though of course that's important, too. If you are fortunate enough to advance in your job, use your position to help other people who are still at a lower level. Work to make sure your company or agency doesn't discriminate on the basis of race or sex. It is only in this way that employment discrimination will be eliminated in the long run.

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION

What should you do if you are faced with sex or race discrimination in promotion, hiring, or any other area? Unfortunately, discrimination is still very much a part of the working world and most women run into it at one time or another. One of the first things you can do to begin fighting discrimination is to find out what your rights really are. One way to do this is to send away for a pamphlet on the subject, such as the one listed in this chapter's Resources section. Other books or pamphlets may be available from your public library, state employment service, or human rights commission. Keep in mind that many employers really don't know what the laws are, either, and some discriminatory practices may simply be the result of ignorance. Of course, their impact is the same whether they are the result of ignorance or deliberate breaking of the law, so in either case you should work to change them.

If you feel you are the victim of discrimination, here are some pointers:

1. Get the best possible legal advice from people who are experienced in antidiscrimination cases. Many states have commissions or agencies especially set up to handle these kinds of cases, and they handle them for free. Go to them or to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of the U.S. government.

2. Generally, you must go through the regular internal, that is, company, agency, or union grievance procedures before one of these outside government agencies will take up your case. Be sure to do this.

3. Document <u>everything</u> that might have a bearing on your situation. Keep dated notes on conversations, phone calls, or meetings where your case was discussed. Keep dated notes of any discriminatory behavior or statements on the part of your supervisor or others. Keep any memos or letters to or from you or your employer that might relate to your case.

4. Once it becomes known that you have filed charges of discrimination, you may face harassment from your employer and co-workers. You may be labeled a troublemaker or attempts may be made to defame your character or make you out to be a bad person. Keep dated notes and inform your lawyer about any harassment you run into. This harassment is illegal, and you may be able to use it to strengthen your case further.

5. Often if an employer has discriminated against one person, he or she has also discriminated against other people. Look for a <u>pattern of discrimination</u> in your company or agency. If possible, get other people to file grievances along with you. The legal system will sometimes act more quickly on cases in which a number of people seem to have been victimized by a particular employer.

6. Try to find a support network within your company or agency. It's a long, hard, and emotionally draining experience fighting discrimination, and you need all the help you can get. If you can't get support within your workplace, look for it outside.

7. Don't expect to get a decision on your case right away. It can take two to three years or more for a case or race or sex discrimination to be decided by the courts.

8. Try to keep cool regardless of how your employer acts. Don't stoop to name-calling and save confrontations for the courtroom, if at all possible. If you act calmly and rationally, you will be more believable and more likely to win your case. One of the first things employers will do if you bring charges against them is to try to prove that you are irrational, unreasonable, or a poor worker. Make sure they don't succeed in this.

It takes bravery and strength of character to carry through with a charge of employment discrimination. It's important for more and more people to do it, though, because it is one of the few ways we have to force employers to follow the law and deal fairly with their workers, regardless of race or sex.

<u>Discussion</u>:

Has anyone in the class ever met with discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, race, or other factors? If so, what actions were taken?

RESOURCES

Brief Highlights of Major Federal Laws and Orders on Sex Discrimination in Employment. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, n.d.

This booklet presents summaries of all the important laws affecting women workers. Very useful, and easy to understand. Can be obtained free from the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210.

1975 Handbook on Women Workers. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

Part I of this excellent resource book offers statistical information on women as workers (including working mothers), the occupations women are in, their earnings, and their educational levels. Part II is called "Laws Governing Women's Employment and Status," and includes sections on federal laws, state laws, maternity laws, occupational safety and health, and the civil and political status of women. Part III is "Institutions and Mechanisms to Advance the Status of Women," containing among other things descriptions of all federal programs specifically directed at women's issues. Can be obtained free from the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210, by referring to Bulletin 297.

A Working Woman's Guide to Her Job Rights. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, n.d.

This pamphlet covers getting a job, discrimination in promotion, maternity leave, occupational safety and health, and Social Security. It tells you what the law is and what to do if you are a victim of illegal practices. Can be obtained from the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210, by referring to Leaflet SS.

Chapter 3-Developing A Support Network

OBJECTIVE: To learn about and discuss different types of support networks, including unions.

Holding down a job can sometimes seem more trouble than it's worth. When you feel depressed, harassed, or exploited on the job, it's time to develop some sort of support network. Your support network can be friends, family, co-workers, or others. What it can give you is encouragement, constructive feedback, and backing if you have some sort of problem at work, or if you are trying to make changes in the conditions of employment for all workers.

Here are some examples of support systems at work:

> Charlotte's boss had been bothering her with obscene remarks. Charlotte talked to some of the other women on the clerical staff and it turned out that five other women had had problems with the same man. Together they took their complaints in writing to the next highest supervisor. When this man questioned their story, they all supported each other. Together they were more believable than each woman individually would have been. The man was not fired, as they had hoped, but he was severely criticized and made to give Charlotte a good evaluation and, of course, to stop bothering her and other women in the office.

> Teresita works as a telephone installer. She likes her job, but she gets a lot of harassment from the men she works with. Every week or so she gets together for dinner with a group of women in her town who are in nontraditional jobs like telephone installation, carpentry, roofing, etc. They all talk about their experiences, good and bad. Teresita always feels much better after these sessions.

> Sarah works at a very demanding job and often comes home exhausted. Her two teenage daughters (she is divorced) give her a lot of support and encouragement and do much of the housework to help her save her energy.

> Alma is working up through the ranks in her agency. She is befriended by an older woman, Suzanne, who is much higher up in the agency. Suzanne acts as Alma's mentor. She suggests books for Alma to read, courses she can take, and people she should meet, and she always encourages Alma to do her best.

Unfortunately, though, support networks aren't always easy to find. Often the people you work with are unfriendly, competitive, and the opposite of supportive. They may act suspicious or hostile if you seem interested in improving your employer's attitude toward women or if you talk about getting more women or minorities into higher-paying jobs. Some companies actually encourage these competitive attitudes in their workers, believing they result in greater productivity. Also, if workers are all competing with one another, they are less likely to band together and push for higher wages or better working conditions.

There is no sure way of dealing with this kind of problem, but it's helpful to follow these three rules in dealing with co-workers:

1. Don't act superior to or look down on co-workers who aren't supportive or who don't seem to want to put effort into improving their own working conditions. People often have good reasons for behaving the way they do. Try to respect people even if you disagree with them. Acting as if you're better or brighter than other people only makes them more hostile and gives you a bad reputation.

2. Don't make more waves than the swimming pool can handle. That is, don't sound so extreme that people are turned off by you or decide you're slightly crazy. If you're trying to make changes in your workplace, start with things for which at least some people have sympathy. Don't fall into the trap of being a martyr, a person who has great plans for change, but who is appreciated by nobody.

3. Try to be supportive of other people when they run into problems. You may get them to be more supportive of you later on.

Discussion:

Break up into small groups of about six people each. Choose a recorder, and after the discussion have her report the group's main conclusions to the entire class.

1. What are some problems you have run into at work? How have you dealt with them?

2. What kinds of support networks have you been able to develop on the job? Have they helped you deal with stress? How have you helped other people deal with stress?

3. How do you feel about Suzanne's helping Alma along? What prevents more of these helping relationships from growing up between women?

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING SUPPORT NETWORKS

You don't always have to build your own support networks. Often one already exists and you just need to plug yourself in. Is the job you are in a union job? Unions have many functions, but one very important one is to represent

the needs of workers when they come into conflict with "management" or the employer. Many unions also offer other support to their members in the form of benefits like medical insurance, pensions, etc., and expert advice on legal issues, worker safety, and other important matters. Unions are formed on the philosophy that a group of people has a stronger voice than one person alone would have.

At the present time, only a small number of women workers are organized into unions, but the number is growing every day. Attempts are being made across the country to unionize jobs traditionally held by women, for example, secretarial, waitressing, and hospital jobs. When these jobs are unionized, workers will be in a stronger position to demand better wages and working conditions from their employers. At the same time, women are moving into unions that have traditionally been made up mostly of men, like the United Auto Workers and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters. Women are now being elected to important positions in these unions, and unions are beginning to look seriously at issues relating to the employment of women. There is even a national organization of union women who work together to promote the unionization of women and make women more effective in their unions. See the Resources section of this chapter for information on the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

If you already carry a union card, become active in your union. Find out what, if anything, it is doing for women. If it doesn't do much, encourage it to do more. Some unions have been very supportive of women who are pressing charges against employers or working to get better provisions for child care. Others have not been so encouraging, but as more and more women become active union members, this will probably change.

Union support is especially useful for these reasons:

1. Unions have money.
2. Unions usually have large memberships; there is a lot of power in numbers.
3. Unions have a great deal of experience working on behalf of employees who have problems with employers.
4. Unions can provide places to meet.
5. Unions often have newspapers or newsletters that will help publicize activities.
6. Unions usually have a lot of clout with employers.

If you don't belong to a union and there isn't any move to bring in a union where you work, look for other kinds of support. One excellent source is women's organizations within your company or agency. Make sure you find a group which is concerned about the same things you are. Some groups concern themselves only with the needs of women who are in managerial or supervisory positions. Others have more general goals. Often groups which were not

originally started for the purpose of improving employment practices affecting women can be persuaded to begin working on issues like child care or sexual harassment in the workplace.

In developing a support network, don't get into the position of rediscovering the wheel. Use the networks that are already there when possible, but learn to change them so that they do more for you and for other women.

Discussion:

Talk about any experiences you or anyone you know has had with unions. Why do you think relatively few women's jobs are unionized? What can unions do to help their women members? What can women's organizations do within companies or agencies to improve the status of women workers?

RESOURCES

The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) will send out a free packet of information to interested persons. Their mailing address is CLUW, 15 Union Square, New York, NY 10003, or call (212) 777-5330. The packet includes sample copies of the CLUW Newsletter, an information sheet on CLUW, a booklet about a CLUW research project on child care, and an application for membership, as well as some newspaper articles and information about other CLUW publications and activities. Women who are already members of a union can join CLUW as voting members. Women who are not presently in a union can join as associate members.

UNIT VI-Family Communication

Chapter 1 - Communicating With Small Children

OBJECTIVE: To explore communication problems that come up with small children, and learn how careful decision making prepares you to communicate better.

Exercise:

STEP 1: Someone goes to the board and writes down the group's ideas for common problems that come up in communicating with small children (brainstorming).

Example

1. Explaining to your kids that you haven't enough money to buy them Christmas presents
2. Getting children to watch less TV
3. Telling a child you've obtained a divorce

STEP 2: Break up into groups of about six people each. Each group should choose a notetaker and decide on a "problem" to work on from the brainstorming session. Then decide on three or four different ways to communicate with a child about the problem. The group decides what is good about each way (or "alternative") and what is bad about it, using the sheets provided. After the discussion, each group should present to the whole class the alternatives it has thought up, and the arguments for and against each one.

Example

Your ex-husband says bad things about you to your kids whenever he visits them. You've already asked him to stop, but he refuses. Should you talk about this to your children, and if so, how?

Alternative 1: *Ignore the whole thing and pretend it's not happening. Don't say anything to your kids.*

Good	Bad
I won't cause a scene. Maybe my ex-husband will be less hostile in time.	Kids will be confused and afraid to talk about what's going on. Kids will do the same thing when faced with upsetting problems--pretend they aren't happening.

Alternative 2: *Say bad things about your ex-husband right back to your kids, so they will realize he's a liar.*

Good	Bad
This might make me feel better.	Kids won't know whom to believe.
It's only what he deserves.	Kids will feel even more torn than they already are.
	Situation with my ex-husband might get even worse, with everyone exchanging insults.

Alternative 3: *Tell kids their father isn't really responsible for what he's saying, and that in a few months he'll probably be sorry he said those things. Try not to say anything else bad about him.*

Good	Bad
This doesn't force me to stoop to his level.	I feel he <u>is</u> responsible for what he's saying. This explanation lets him off the hook.
It will give kids a chance to talk about their feelings.	Kids might not really understand a "psychological" explanation.
It won't start another battle of insults.	
I might come out looking better in the long run for being understanding and rational.	

<u>Note</u>: There is seldom a clear "right" answer for difficult communication problems, as the above example shows. It is up to each individual to choose what will work best in her particular situation. Even the alternative with the most "good" points about it is not necessarily the best for everyone.

Use the following page to discuss alternative solutions to problems.

What is the problem? _____

_____

Alternative 1 _____

_____

Good _____ Bad _____

_____

Alternative 2 _____

_____

Good _____ Bad _____

_____

Alternative 3 _____

_____

Good _____ Bad _____

_____

Alternative 4 _____

_____

Good _____ Bad _____

_____

STEP 3: Break up into the same small groups again and have each group choose the alternative it likes best. Now role play communicating that alternative to a child. One person should play the mother and the other people the children, or one person can play one child. You should spend about 15 minutes on one alternative. Role play two alternatives.

STEP 4: Each small group should present its role play to the whole class.

Discussion:

What are some of the special communication problems that come up for women who are divorced, separated, or widowed, and also are mothers of small children?

Chapter 2 - Communicating With Teenagers

OBJECTIVE: To learn about some common problems parents have in communicating with their teenage children.

Here some parents talk about communication problems they have with their teenagers:

> "My son is really hostile to me. Sometimes he won't talk to me for days except for yes or no. He gets furious every time I try to start a conversation. It's like everything I say is wrong."

> "My daughter doesn't respect me at all. She's always judging me, my marriage, the way I look, the fact that I'm a housewife, the way our house looks.... I don't know whether to change everything about myself, stay the same, or what. Her criticism hurts me."

> "I'm pretty sure my son is smoking dope. I don't know whether he's just experimenting, or if it's a sign that there's some worse problem. I don't know whether to talk to him about it or not. If I say he absolutely can't smoke dope, it might just make it more attractive to him."

> "I don't want to be overprotective, but I'm really worried about some of the people my daughter's been running around with. If I forbid her to bring them home, she'll just see them at school. I'm worried that she'll get pregnant."

> "My son used to tell me everything that was going on with him. Now I'd be the last person to know."

What can a parent do? Unfortunately, the experts don't have any real solutions; they can only give us suggestions. In the end, the decision is up to the individual parent. Here are some ways that some parents have found useful in relating to their teenage children. They are not necessarily the best for you, and most of them will work only in some situations.

1. When your teenagers won't talk to you, don't force them. Don't despair, either. Instead, go out and get involved in activities of your own. This reassures your teenagers that you have other things going on besides clinging to or demanding attention from them. This is especially important for the mother who may be feeling unimportant or abandoned because her children don't depend on her as much as they did when they were younger.

2. Often a teenager who can't or won't communicate with his or her parents will communicate quite well with another adult friend or relative. This is very healthy and is part of the process of becoming a mature adult with adult friends, so encourage it in a quiet way. Refusal to communicate is usually a passing phase.

3. Do not set strict rules and punishments for a lot of different wrongdoings, such as:

   "If I ever hear of you smoking dope, I'll turn you in to the police."

   "You are absolutely not to see that boy Steven again. If you do, I'll ground you for a year."

   "If you ever get pregnant, I'll kick you out of the house forever."

   Some parents believe in letting the teenager know what their feelings are about issues like premarital sex or drugs, but leave the final decision to the teenager on most or all issues. They argue that this method has the advantages of:

   a. Encouraging your teenagers to come to you if they have any serious problems. You have shown you respect their common sense, so they are more likely to see you as a rational, helpful, loving person.

   b. Not making your teenagers do something out of spite just because it is against your rules or because your rules represent an infringement on their "rights" as maturing adults.

   If you use this method, it is important to communicate to your teenagers that you are very concerned, have strong opinions, and would be very unhappy if they went against them. You don't want to make them think that you don't care what they do. On the other hand, you do want to let them know that you still love them and will help them if they need it.

4. Some parents rely on strict rules and regulations for their children. If they and their children feel that this works, then they shouldn't think they have to change. In fact, at different times most parents use all of the following methods:

a. Rules (with or without punishments attached).

b. Telling the teenager their views and then letting the teenager make her or his own decision.

c. Ignoring a wrongdoing if it seems to be only an experiment.*

Parents change their child-rearing techniques based on the age of their teenagers, the seriousness of the particular situation, and what has or has not worked for them before.

5. It is very important in all aspects of child rearing to try as much as possible to practice what you preach. If you tell your teenagers not to smoke dope, but you get drunk every Saturday, they will tend to take you less seriously and even feel they are justified in violating your rule that they can't smoke dope.

6. When teenagers do get into trouble, it's a natural tendency for their parent or parents to feel guilty about it. This is especially hard for the single mother, who may be asking herself questions like:

   "If there hadn't been all that trouble over the divorce and custody, would my son still be flunking out of school?"

   "Did my daughter's getting pregnant have anything to do with my working all the time she was growing up?"

   Most guilt is neither reasonable nor deserved, but it can still make you feel very bad. If you're really dragged down by guilt feelings or general depression about your worth as a parent, counseling may be the answer, either for you or for your teenagers, or both. Family counseling services are available in many towns and cities, often with fees on a sliding scale. Sitting around blaming yourself for your children's problems doesn't usually make for good communication on either side.

   Another possible solution to guilt feelings is to share your experiences with other parents of teenagers. Some churches, schools, and other community organizations sponsor discussion groups that many parents have found very helpful.

---

*These three methods are outlined in a slightly different fashion in "The Teenage Years," by Jeanne Jacobs Speizer, in Ourselves and Our Children © 1978, Boston Women's Health Book Collective, p. 101. Published by Random House, New York. Used by permission of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Inc., and Random House.

In general, it's usually not a good idea to make your children your whole life. If you put all your waking thoughts and all your energy into your children, you're likely to take it particularly hard if they go through a crazy, confused, or troubled phase. Having interests in your life other than your children can help you get perspective on, and be less devastated by, troubles when and if they appear. Make a special effort to develop other interests, especially now, when many women who have been primarily homemakers and mothers think about taking a paid job, going back to school, or getting more involved in volunteer activities. Remember, <u>your</u> life is just as important as your children's lives, so spend some time on yourself and try to weather the storm as far as your children are concerned.

<u>Discussion</u>:

1. What problems have you run into in raising teenagers? How have you solved them?

2. What are some common fears that divorced, separated, or widowed women have about raising teenagers by themselves?

3. Can the years when your children are teenagers be a time for "new beginnings" for you? What things stand in the way of your making a new start?

Chapter 3 - Communicating With A Partner

OBJECTIVE: To learn ways to communicate more effectively with a partner.
To discuss the role of communication in relationships (including marriage).

Practicing new communication skills can make us more effective in our relations with others. Here are some communication techniques you may find useful, though they will not work in all cases.

PARAPHRASING

Paraphrasing is testing how well you heard and understood your partner's comment by repeating his or her idea in your own words. This helps cut through unclear or confusing statements or statements that have several possible meanings.

Example

Linda: You should never become a state worker.

Johanna: You mean I'm not smart enough to take a state job?

Linda: No, I mean that you like working outdoors so much that a state job would drive you crazy.

Johanna: I see, you think that state office work is not for me, but I would do okay if it was a state job that let me work outside.

Linda: Right, working indoors is not for you.

Exercise:

For each case listed below, the group should try to think of all the possible meanings. What are some other statements that are often misunderstood, or understood in several different ways?

1. "That dress doesn't seem to fit you very well anymore."
2. "We shouldn't have had kids."
3. "It's getting harder to make ends meet.

PERCEPTION CHECKING

Perception checking means asking if you are reading your partner's feelings correctly.

Example

> *"I get the impression that you are angry with me. Are you?"*
>
> (Do not say, "Why are you angry with me?" This is mind reading, not perception checking.)

Nothing can make another person angry more quickly than when you make personal judgments about her or him. Perception checking does not express approval or disapproval of your partner. Instead, it asks if you are understanding his or her feelings accurately. You open your statement or question with "I feel" or "I get the impression." Try to remember that you are communicating to your partner how you feel, not making a judgment about his or her mood or personality.

Exercise:

Take a partner. Take turns practicing perception checking. You can use one of the ideas below or make some up for yourself.

1. Your friend wears a frown and has been answering you in monosyllables (yes, no, hmm...).

2. Your husband comes home and bangs around the house noisily, cursing and complaining about the children.

3. You and your children's father are talking about disciplining children. He is getting red in the face and starting to talk loudly and emotionally.

FEEDBACK

Giving feedback is reporting to your partner your reactions to his or her behavior and your observations about it. This technique reports how you feel without demanding a change. Feedback can be either critical (negative) or complimentary (positive). When you give feedback, especially negative feedback, you get your feelings out and you take responsibility for the feelings' being yours. It's important to give feedback in a way that hurts the other person's feelings as little as possible. Being able to receive feedback gracefully is important, too. Don't fly off the handle when people give you constructive, encouraging feedback. Let people know you respect their opinions. Note that in the following example both people make a special effort to say things in a nonangry, nonhostile way.

Example

Asking for feedback

Cathy: I feel lonely and kind of unimportant when your friend Bill comes over because you don't seem to include me in your conversation. Is there something about me Bill doesn't like?

Feedback

Sam: Well, you always get really busy when Bill is here, so he thinks you're not interested in knowing him. Is it our basketball talk you don't like? That talk is just our opener, something we both like.

Receiving feedback

Cathy: You're right. I'm not too interested in basketball talk, so I get up and putter around.

Partner suggests a solution and encourages you to follow the suggestion

Sam: Yes, you always seem to disappear, but it would be nice if you could stick around and take part in the conversation. Bill and I would both enjoy that. And we do talk about other things besides basketball.

When you give negative feedback, it's often a good idea to make a suggestion for how the situation might be improved.

Don't just say, *"You did a bad job on that."*

Do say, *"I didn't like the way you did that part. I think it would be better if you just let people listen and didn't make them answer questions."*

Positive feedback is always welcome.

"I like the things you said in our small group."

Exercise:

Pick another partner and take turns asking for and giving feedback. Practice both positive and negative feedback, using the situations below as guides. You may also take this time to give constructive feedback to the workshop coordinator on how she could do a better job next time.

1. Your boyfriend has a bad habit of interrupting people. You want him to stop.

2. Your best friend sang at a wedding and she wants to know how she did. You feel she did an excellent job, but that the song she chose wasn't the best possible choice for the occasion.

3. Your brother is a really nice person, but he keeps trying to get everyone he knows to join his church. He asks you why people are avoiding him.

4. You are very active in a local political organization. Lately you've been wondering if other people in the organization are resenting you.

LETTER WRITING

Letter writing can be a good way to communicate how you feel about a problem. Try to use some of the skills of paraphrasing, perception checking, and feedback in your letters. Writing can be especially effective when face-to-face communications are at a low point. It gives you more time to think about what you want to say and present it in a fair way. Do try to be fair.

Example

Dear Ricardo,

I feel very depressed about last night. It seemed to me that you were very insensitive to Maria's feelings. Kids that age feel very strongly what other children think about them and I think your turning the whole thing into a joke only made it worse. I'm also kind of sorry I blew up the way I did. Maybe we both overreacted.

I'm writing this instead of saying it to you because I don't quite trust myself yet to talk about it to you in a clear and fair way. Answer me soon, please.

Love,
Martha

LISTS

Lists can help you clarify problems that are bothering you. You can also use lists to organize your thoughts before an argument, or just to promote discussion with friends or with the person you live with.

Task:

Complete one of the following lists or make up one of your own.

List A

Good and Bad Things about My relationship with

_____

(A friend, a husband, a lover, etc.)

I think the problems are:

I think the good things are:

List B

List on a blank piece of paper your reasons for wanting something. This is useful if you're a person who forgets her arguments in the heat of discussion. If you want, figure out these arguments in a small group.

Note: When discussing a difficult topic, gather your evidence carefully. Pick a good time to talk about it, particularly if it's a family matter. Be prepared beforehand.

List C

Values Checklist

In the list on the next page, mark with an "S" the areas you think married people should agree on in order to have a successful relationship. Mark with a "D" areas that it's okay to disagree on. The whole class may want to compare notes on this.

S = Same

D = Different

1. Child raising_____
2. Religion_____
3. Sexual relations_____
4. Money_____
5. Recreation_____
6. Relatives_____
7. Cultural customs_____
8. Work in general_____
9. Careers for women_____
10. Sharing housework_____
11. Politics_____
12. Vacations (what to do)_____
13. Atmosphere in home_____
14. Food_____
15. Friends (who)_____
16. Friendships (how strong)_____
17. Commitment_____
18. Drinking_____
19. Sex outside marriage_____
20. Style of solving disagreements_____
21. Other_____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____

Discussion:

1. What are some common communication problems between husbands and wives? Men and women in general? Women and other women? Men and other men?

2. At what point does it become impossible to save a marriage or relationship? How much of a role do breakdowns in communication play?

3. How well will the communication techniques described in this chapter work if the other person won't cooperate? Do we sometimes blame ourselves too much for our partner's failure to cooperate in improving communication?

4. Why is communication often so bad between divorced people, or people who have broken off a relationship? What problems does this present? Should communication be improved?

INDEX

Adult education, 47-52, 53-57, 61-63
Age Discrimination in Employment Act (1967), 152
Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). (*See* Public assistance)
Air Force, 72. (*See also* Military)
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), 7
American College Test (ACT). (*See* Examinations)
Antidiscrimination legislation, 151-153, 168
Applications for jobs. (*See* Job applications)
Apprenticeships, 102-105. (*See also* Nontraditional jobs)
Armed services. (*See* Military)
Assertiveness, 11-20; about money, 36, 38-39; books about, 19-20; in your community, 84-86; on the job, 163-168; over housework, 16-17; techniques for, 14-18; with landlords, 17; with lawyers, 36

Bank accounts, 29, 31, 40
Battered women, 5, 6; and their children, 8-10; and welfare officials, 14-15; response of counselors and psychiatrists to, 8; shelters for, 7; support groups for, 8-10
Benefits: military, 73
Bias. (*See* Discrimination)
Blue-collar jobs. (*See* Nontraditional jobs)
Budgeting, 36-43

Career(s), 89-118; advancing your, 165-166; and children, 90; and work values, 89-94; books on, 111-112; counseling about, 53, 67-68; exploring different, 109-112; setting goals for, 113-118; vocational aptitude tests and, 97-98
CETA. (*See* Comprehensive Employment and Training Act)
Checking accounts, 29, 31, 40
Child abuse, 24, 86
Child care, 61, 77
Children, 175-182; and violence in the family, 6, 8-9, 24, 86; books for, 82; communicating with, 175-178, 179-182; custody of, 23; of single parents, 5, 8, 23-27, 175-178, 181-182
Civil Rights Act (1964), 151
Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), 171, 172
College, 53-63, 69, 103; books about, 62-63; by correspondence, 70; catalogues for, 56-57; community colleges, 53-54; courses and programs, 55; financial aid for, 57-61, 63; four-year colleges, 54-55; older students in, 53; study skills for, 61-62
College Level Examination Program (CLEP), 61, 62
Communications, 175-188; feedback in, 184-186; letter writing in, 186; lists in, 186-188; paraphrasing in, 183; perception checking in, 184; with husband or lover, 183-188; with small children, 175-178; with teenagers, 179-182
Community colleges, 53-54. (*See also* College)
Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), 65-68
Consumer rights, 77-79, 80
Correspondence school, 70, 75
Counseling, 7, 8, 22-23, 53; career, 67; college, 53, 62; family, 181. (*See also* Peer counseling)
Cover letters, 143-148
Credit, 32-33, books about getting, 43-44
Custody. (*See* Children, custody of)

Day care (*See* Child care)
Decision making: about careers, 101, 109-118; about education, 51, 58-59; about family matters, 24-27; about money, 38-42; about values, 91-94
Depression, 6, 8, 21; due to breakup of marriage, 5-6, 23; due to financial problems, 29, 31; due to job, 163, 167, 169; due to violence in the family, 8-10, 24

DESC technique, 15-18
Discrimination: due to age, 105, 124, 132, 152-153; due to handicap, 151; due to having dependents, 133, 152-153; due to marital status, 124, 133, 152-154; due to pregnancy, 152-153; due to race, 32, 97-98, 124-125, 152, 159, 165-168; due to sex, 73-74, 91, 97-98, 99-100, 103-107, 122, 124-125, 152, 159, 165-167; due to sexual preference, 153-154; fighting discrimination, 166-168, 170-172; in awarding credit, 32-33
Displaced homemakers, 5-7, 29, 59, 62-63, 66-67, 134
Divorce, 5-6; and job seeking, 66, 143, 153-154; and parenting (*see* Single parents); and public assistance, 34; discrimination due to, 133, 151-153
Domestic violence. (*See* Battered women)
Drugs, 23; and children, 179-181

Emotional problems, 7-8; related to stress, 21-23. (*See also* Counseling, Depression)
Examinations: college entrance tests (SAT, ACT), 54; College Level Examination Program (CLEP), 61, 62; in college, 62; High School Equivalency (GED), 47-52, 53-55; vocational aptitude, 97-98

Fair employment laws, 152
Family violence. (*See* Battered women)
Federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act (1975), 32
Federal Rehabilitation Act (1973), 157
Financial problems. (*See* Money)

GED. (*See* High School Equivalency Diploma)
Guilt, 22; about breakup of relationship, 6; over children, 24-27, 181. (*See also* Depression)

Handicapped persons, 151-152
Harassment: by ex-husband, 175-176; on the job, 105, 163, 167, 169
High School Equivalency Diploma (GED), 47-52, 53-55; books helping to prepare for, 52; content of test for, 47-48; eligibility for, 47; how to get, 47; studying for, 48-52
Homosexuality, 152, 154
Housework, 11, 16-17, 23, 24, 169

Interviews, 149-155; books on, 155; dos and don'ts for, 149-151; illegal questions at, 151-154; preparation for, 149-151

Job applications, 140-141; problem questions on, 140
Job notices, 121-126; common abbreviations used in, 123; discriminatory, 124-126
Job openings, 121-122
Job resumes. (*See* Resumes)
Job seeking. (*See* Cover letters, Interviews, Job applications, Job notices, Job openings, Resumes)
Job skills. (*See* Skills)
Job training, 65-76; at private trade or technical schools, 69-70; books on where to get job training, 75-76; by correspondence, 70; for nontraditional jobs (*see* Nontraditional jobs); in private industry, 71; in the armed services, 71-74; through nonprofit organizations, 68-69
Jobs: entry-level, 65-68, 109-111. (*See also* (Career(s), Job notices, Job openings, Job seeking, Job training)

Lawyers, 29, 36
Libraries: how to use, 82-84
Loans, 29-30, 32-33. (*See also* credit)

Medicaid, 34
Mentors, 166, 169
Military, 71-74; advantages of, 73; disadvantages of, 73-74; training in, 71-72
Money, 29-44; and values, 38-40; being assertive about, 36, 38-39; books about, 43-44; feeling helpless about, 5, 29; investing, 40-42; management, 31-32; saving, 40-43. (*See also* Budgeting, Credit, Public assistance)

Nontraditional jobs, 65, 69, 89, 95-96, 98, 99-108; apprenticeships, 102-105; books about, 107-108; how to get into, 99-108; training for, 53, 55, 65-66, 69-72, 101-105; kinds of, 102-103.

Peer counseling, 7-10, 24-27. (*See also* Counseling)
Promotions: how to get, 165-168. (*See also* Career(s))
Public assistance, 14-15, 37, 66, 77-78, 85; types of and eligibility for, 34-35

Racism. (*See* Discrimination: due to race)
Rape, 7, 85. (*See also* Harassment: on the job)
Recommendations from employers, 127, 133, 160-161
Resumes, 127-139; books on, 141; functional, 128-134; how to write, 127-135; including homemaking and volunteer skills in, 127, 130-131, 134; samples of: functional, 136-137; traditional, 128, 133, 138-139; use of, 121-122; what not to put in, 135

Savings accounts, 31, 40
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). (*See* Examinations)
Self-confidence, 5-7; building up, 7-8, 12-14. (*See also* Assertiveness)
Self-defeating behavior, 13
Separation, 5-6; and parenting (*see* Single parents); discrimination due to, 133, 152-154
Sex typing: in child rearing, 5-6, 103, 106-107; in occupations, 5, 67, 73-74, 77, 99-101, 109, 165
Sexism. (*See* Discrimination: due to sex)
Sexual harassment. (*See* Harassment: on the job)
Sexual preference, 152, 154
Single parents, 6, 8-9, 69, 154; and child rearing, 24-27, 175-178, 181-182; and stress, 21-22, 23-27; exclusion from the military, 73-74; resources for, 77-79. (*See also* Discrimination: due to marital status and due to having dependents)
Skills: gained from homemaking or parenting, 95-96, 131-132; gained from low-paying jobs, 129-130; gained from volunteer work, 95-96, 130-131; related to jobs, 101, 104, 109, 128-129
Stress, 21-24; and single parenting, 21-22, 23; effects of, 21; in test taking, 48-49, 97-98; ways to relieve, 21-23
Support networks and support groups, 7-10, 23; for battered women, 8-10; for dealing with teenagers, 181; on the job, 167, 169-172

Technical schools. (*See* Trade schools)
Teenagers, 179-182; and drugs, 179-181; and pregnancy, 179-181; and guilt over being a single parent, 181; setting rules for, 180-181
Tests. (*See* Examinations)
Time management, 22-24, 49-51
Trade schools, 69-70. (*See also* Job training)
Trade unions. (*See* Unions)
Trades and women. (*See* Nontraditional jobs)
Training. (*See* Job training)

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 153, 166
Unions: trade, 170-171; welfare, 35, 85
Universities. (*See* College)

Values: in choosing a job, 89-94; in intimate relationships, 187-188; in managing money, 38-40; in raising children, 180-181
Violence in the family. (*See* Battered women, Child abuse)
Volunteer work, 77-81, 84-86; as preparation for paid work, 95-96, 127, 130-131

Welfare. (*See* Public assistance)
Widowhood, 5-6; and financial problems, 29-32. (*See also* Single parents)
Wills, 30, 36
Work habits, 159-161, 163-167; and getting employer recommendations, 160-161; tips for the first days, 159-160

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Margaret Hunt has been a fund raiser, writer, vocational counselor, lobbyist, consultant, and teacher for a number of community-based organizations focusing on equal employment opportunity, domestic violence, and the concerns of low-income women and displaced homemakers. She holds degrees in Music and Women's Studies, and recently moved from Alaska to New York City.

Constance Munro, a mother of seven children, returned to school at age 35, received her GED certificate, and then entered Adult Basic Education teacher training through VISTA. She organized community groups in volunteerism, the arts, health, employment, community education, family, and social change advocacy. She holds an A.A. in Social Sciences and is presently working on a B.A. at the University of Alaska, Juneau, and an M.A.T. in Adult and Community Education at Alaska Pacific University.